

Contract No.: SR grant #2001-1735; Casey grant #202.0007
MPR Reference No.: 8841-104

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**Georgia GoodWorks!
Transitional Work and
Intensive Support for
TANF Recipients Nearing
the Time Limit**

Final Report

December 2002

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study would not have been possible without the hard work of many people in the state of Georgia. From the Georgia Department of Labor, Linda Johnson, Nancy Meeden, and Bertha Tanzymore worked as a team to provide us with a history of GoodWorks!, clarify state policy and service delivery, coordinate local site visits, and review descriptive site visit summaries and drafts of the final report. Lyn Meyers assisted with the administrative data analysis. Wendi Copeland from Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia and the Central Savannah River Area coordinated our original visit to Goodworks! that eventually led to this project and shared her experience as an employment service provider in developing the supported employment program model and the initial implementation of GoodWorks! in the pilot site. We owe a special thank you to Commissioners Michael Thurmond at the Georgia Department of Labor and Jim Martin at the Department of Human Resources for taking time out of their busy schedules to share their vision of GoodWorks! with us. Local GoodWorks! program administrators, front-line staff, and agency partners welcomed us into their programs, describing program operations in detail and sharing program successes and challenges. The information shared with us by current and former GoodWorks! program participants and employers during the focus groups conducted in each study site provided a more complete picture of how GoodWorks! operates on a day-to-day basis.

At Mathematica Policy Research, LaDonna Pavetti directed this project. She provided guidance when necessary, reviewed drafts, and contributed to the final report. Michelle Derr managed and participated in every aspect of the study and synthesized qualitative site visit data, state administrative data, and information gathered during focus groups into the final report. Angelina KewalRamani led the analysis of state administrative data used in the final report and participated in local site visits. Jon Jacobson provided helpful technical guidance on the administrative data analysis. Heather Hesketh analyzed the program data. Jim Ohls and Gretchen Kirby reviewed drafts of this report and provided thoughtful comments. Jackie Kauff participated in the initial development of this study. Donna Dorsey and Alfreda Holmes provided administrative support, and Daryl Hall provided editorial support.

Finally, we owe a special thank you to Annette Case from the Economic Opportunity Institute in Seattle for reviewing a draft of the final report and providing useful suggestions and to our funders, the Annie E. Casey and Smith Richardson foundations, which made this study possible.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is an urgent need for welfare recipients to work. Welfare program work requirements, sanctions, and time limits are all used to encourage these individuals to find jobs. Although many welfare recipients have found jobs, some have not been able to find steady employment because of a limited work history, little education, and formidable personal and family barriers to work. These hard-to-employ individuals often need additional support and time to achieve their employment goals.

In 1999, Georgia allocated \$18.6 million in TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) funds to design and implement an intensive supported employment program, GoodWorks!, for hard-to-employ welfare recipients approaching the state's 48-month time limit on benefits. One of the first states to design a program targeted to TANF families reaching the time limit, Georgia is also one of the few that provides supported employment services to welfare recipients.

This report presents the findings from a study designed and conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR), with support from the Annie E. Casey and Smith Richardson foundations, of the Georgia GoodWorks! program. The purpose of the study was to learn more about a potentially "promising practice"—the provision of transitional paid employment and intensive supportive services to hard-to-employ welfare recipients nearing or already at the time limit. The report describes the key components of GoodWorks! and its administrative infrastructure, program accomplishments and challenges, and the "lessons learned" in implementing the program.

In designing this study, we obtained data from three primary sources: (1) in-depth site visits to five communities in Georgia, (2) in-person interviews with state officials and program administrators, and (3) state management information system (MIS) administrative data and job placement data from each of the study sites, which were selected by the Georgia Department of Labor. The sites include Bibb County (Macon), Clarke County (Athens), DeKalb County (Decatur), Fulton County (areas surrounding Atlanta), and Richmond County (Augusta).

OVERVIEW OF GOODWORKS!

What Is It?

GoodWorks! is a transitional employment program based on a supported employment model commonly used with individuals who have disabilities. This model differs from traditional employment programs in the level and intensity of supports provided by program staff. It is also unique insofar as clients are assigned to a paid work placement in order to gain work experience and learn how to function effectively in a work environment. Key program services and supports include: in-depth assessments, paid (TANF-funded) work placements, enhanced social support, job coaching, individualized job placement, and long-term follow-up to help clients stay employed. The assumptions underlying the GoodWorks! program is that most individuals can work with the right amount and types of support, and that families will be better off if at least one parent is working.

Who Is Served by GoodWorks!

GoodWorks! serves hard-to-employ welfare recipients who are near or already at Georgia's 48-month welfare time limit and are not participating in a work or training activity. Welfare recipients who have received TANF for longer than 30 months are eligible for GoodWorks!. Targeted individuals have little or no work experience, a limited education, and personal and family challenges that interfere with work but do not preclude them from working.

KEY COMPONENTS OF GOODWORKS!

Aggressive outreach, screening and assessment, paid work placements, enhanced supports, job placement, and long-term follow up are the key components of GoodWorks!.

Aggressive Outreach to Increase Program Participation

To encourage participation, local sites hire outreach recruiters or use GoodWorks! staff to conduct home visits to individuals referred by DFCS. Outreach is intended to screen for appropriate referrals, identify client's immediate service needs, begin to access work supports, and generate enthusiasm for the program.

Screening and Assessment to Individualize Service Delivery

Program staff use formal and informal assessments to create personalized service plans for clients. A variety of assessments are used to identify clients' service needs such as an in-depth employment and psychological assessment administered by Vocational Rehabilitation, a drug screen and a criminal background check, and a three to four weeks assessment phase in which GoodWorks! staff assess clients' work skills and behaviors while they are working.

Clients Learn to Work by Working

GoodWorks! clients work between 20-30 hours per week in a structured paid work placement in entry-level jobs over a six- to nine-month period before they are linked to permanent employment. This placement—a group arrangement at either the employment service provider or a placement at a nonprofit, public, or for-profit agency in the community—allows clients to make mistakes and correct them without jeopardizing their employment, helps them get accustomed to a work schedule, teaches them basic job skills, and coaches them on healthy workplace behaviors. Clients earn between \$5.15 and \$8.52 per hour.

Enhanced Work Supports Prepare Clients for Steady Employment

The amount and intensity of staff support provided through GoodWorks! not only exceeds that of traditional employment programs but also is greater than most programs for the hard-to-employ. Personal advisors, available to clients 24 hours a day seven days a week, help clients to both identify barriers to employment and access services addressing these barriers, teach clients basic life skills, and work to strengthen their self-esteem and confidence in their ability to work. Job coaches and work-site supervisors interact with clients regularly at the workplace, helping them to function well on the job. In most of the study sites, clients are required to participate in job readiness activities in addition to their work placement.

Clients Are Linked to Permanent Jobs

GoodWorks' ultimate goal is to place clients in appropriate, steady jobs. Where possible, assessment information is used to match clients to work that fit their interests, skills, and personal circumstances. Study sites generally place participants in unsubsidized employment by tapping into existing job placement resources such as the Georgia Department of Labor one-stop career centers or by using in-house job developers who find jobs for participants in a broad range of agency programs.

GoodWorks! Staff Follow Up with Clients After They Get Jobs

In GoodWorks!, job retention support begins at enrollment and extends at least a year after clients start working. According to GoodWorks! staff, consistent and frequent job coaching over time helps instill healthy workplace behaviors. Once clients are employed, personal advisors contact them monthly and, in some cases, more frequently. Follow-up includes helping clients access work supports, mediate interpersonal conflicts between clients and employers, and assist with new job placement for clients who are no longer working. Some study sites provide job retention bonuses to clients who keep their jobs.

ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PROVIDING SERVICES

The administrative framework for providing services is built on a foundation of local agencies working together to serve GoodWorks! participants. GDOL contracts with one or

more local agencies that provide supported employment services to manage day-to-day program operations. Sites weave together existing services and those provided by the contracted employment service provider(s) into a seamless service delivery structure.

Study Sites Build on Existing Collaborative Relationships

In many communities, GoodWorks! builds on existing programs and services that emphasize interagency collaboration and coordination of services. Four of the five study sites operated similar services using Welfare-to-Work funds before GoodWorks! was implemented. These established relationships and structures streamlined the GoodWorks! design and administration process.

GoodWorks! Staff Are the “Backbone” of the Program

GoodWorks! staff are actively involved in helping clients prepare for employment. Hired by the employment service provider, staff usually include a program manager, personal advisors, job coaches, and recruiters. We identified four key findings regarding program staff. First, low client-to-staff ratios, between 15 and 30 cases, allows for enhanced personal support in serving clients. Second, staff work as a team while recruiting, making assessments, conducting case conferences, linking clients to services, monitoring participation and progress in work, and working on job placement and retention. Third, GoodWorks! focus on using staff from different agencies to administer and provide services results in bringing together professionals with different backgrounds, perspectives, and strengths. Fourth, formal and informal case conferences are often held with clients both within and between agencies to identify and coordinate service needs and to determine whether clients are progressing toward employment.

Study Site Service Delivery Decisions Reflect Local Needs and Resources

GoodWorks! is a flexible program. Local sites have therefore tailored services according to available resources. Service delivery varies by site in staffing decisions, the roles and responsibilities handled by provider agencies, and work placement decisions (e.g., types of placements, amount of wages, etc.).

Program Funding

Georgia reinvests its TANF savings from declining caseloads to pay for state GDOL GoodWorks! staff, supported employment services at the local level, and client wages and worker' compensation benefits. Initially, state and competitive Welfare-to-Work funds were used to pay for client wages, but these funds have been spent in most communities. GoodWorks! mandates that localities use existing resources funded by TANF and other sources (e.g., Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser) to provide services.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

In most of the study sites, clients spend on average nine months in the program. The exception is in Fulton County where clients spend an average of five months in the program.

Many GoodWorks! participants find unsubsidized jobs. Job placement rates for all program participants in the study sites range from 35 to 70 percent. The placement rate is highest in Richmond County, the site with the most experience operating Goodworks! It is lowest in Fulton County, which serves a more urban population and has a more complex administrative structure. Fulton County also has the lowest rate of successful program completion. Job placement rates increase substantially when looking only at those who successfully complete the program, ranging from 54 percent in Bibb County to 85 percent in Richmond County.

Most clients work about 35 hours a week in clerical, health care, or service related positions. The median wage for clients in the sites is \$5.75 to \$8.00 per hour. Richmond County, the study site with the highest rate of job placement had the lowest median wage per hour.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES, AND LESSONS LEARNED

GoodWorks! represents a “promising practice” in the effort to secure work for hard-to-employ welfare recipients at or nearing the time limit. The box on the following page highlights some of the key program accomplishments and challenges as well as the lessons learned through program implementation. Below we more fully discuss the key study findings:

- **Administering a program like GoodWorks! and providing the kinds of services it offers means thinking “outside the box.”**

States and localities interested in designing programs like GoodWorks! need to think differently about providing employment services and serving the hard-to-employ. The GoodWorks! experience teaches us that these programs require creativity, flexibility, and commitment at the state and local levels. Given the challenging nature of the target population, program administrators and staff may need to take a more flexible and individualized approach to service delivery.

- **GoodWorks! demonstrates that clients with complex needs can work if they have the right amount and types of supports.**

Those referred to GoodWorks! are long-term welfare recipients not participating in work or training activities. If they were able to find jobs on their own, it is likely that they would have already done so. The GoodWorks! model integrates work with enhanced supports, an approach that has helped to employ many of these hard-to-employ individuals. Indeed, most GoodWorks! completers find jobs.

- **GoodWorks! provides a “second chance” for those who have reached the time limit.**

As the reality of the federal welfare time limit sets in, policymakers and program administrators are struggling to handle the consequences of PRWORA. Repealing the time limits would undermine the credibility of welfare staff who have used them to encourage clients to work, while enforcing them may have arguably harsh effects on families. To resolve the dilemma, states and localities may consider developing programs like GoodWorks! in which clients nearing or at the time limit are given an alternative means of support but are still held accountable for supporting their families.

- **GoodWorks! represents the first step in linking clients to the labor market, but clients may require a different set of services to achieve their long-term employment goals.**

GoodWorks! is a springboard for hard-to-employ individuals, linking them to entry-level jobs where they can obtain work experience. However, many individuals may need more education and training in order to advance to better paying jobs. Program designers and administrators might consider giving more thought to services that improve clients' long-term employment prospects. For example, GoodWorks! staff may use the job retention period to develop long-term employment goals and a plan for reaching them. Otherwise, clients may cycle in and out of jobs and/or remain among the working poor.

- **This study began to build an understanding of the GoodWorks! program, but more research is needed to fully understand how it works and how well it works.**

This study points to several key areas for future research. First, more research is needed on the long-term effects of GoodWorks! on program participants such as job retention, the amount of cycling in and out of jobs, and job advancement. Currently, we have information about the rate of job placement; however, we do not have enough information to determine if clients keep their jobs and what happens if they do not. Second, evaluation using a rigorous experimental design is needed to effectively measure the programs benefits and costs. One of the limitations of this study is that we do not know in the absence of the program if GoodWorks! clients would have found jobs on their own or whether the benefits of the program outweighs the benefits. A more rigorous evaluation would make it possible to determine whether and how much participants' employment and earnings increase because of the program. A more rigorous evaluation could also be used to determine which of the primary program components (the paid work placements, the enhanced supports, or the combination of the two) have the most effect on program outcomes. Third, further evaluation may focus on the sustainability of GoodWorks! over time, particularly as state resources become tight.

Program Accomplishments

- ▶ GoodWorks! stops the benefits clock for families who are nearing the time limit and provides a “safety net” for those who already have reached the end of their time limit.
- ▶ GoodWorks! supports long-term, hard-to-employ welfare recipients who were not participating in any work activities in their efforts to move from welfare to work.
- ▶ Local agencies have been successful at coordinating existing resources to address the needs of clients.
- ▶ GoodWorks! provides employers with entry-level workers who are screened, trained, and supported.
- ▶ GoodWorks! participants feel they benefit from GoodWorks! and from working.

Program Challenges and Lessons Learned

- ▶ Challenge—Effectively sharing agency resources and coordinating service delivery.
- ▶ Lessons
 - “Communicate, communicate, communicate.”
 - Create “win-win” relationships between agencies.
 - Create common interagency goals in the interest of GoodWorks! clients.
 - Hold frequent case conferences.
 - Hire specialized staff to coordinate between agencies.
- ▶ Challenge—Encouraging client participation.
- ▶ Lessons
 - Identify clients who are appropriate for the program.
 - Conduct aggressive outreach.
 - Hold clients accountable to participate.
- ▶ Challenge—Working with those facing severe personal and family challenges.
- ▶ Lessons
 - Acknowledge that the GoodWorks! program is not for everyone.
 - Identify barriers to employment early and aggressively.
 - Seek input from GoodWork! staff and other agency partners.
 - Show enthusiasm about the small steps clients take toward work.
 - Avoid staff burnout.
- ▶ Challenge—Finding permanent jobs for clients.
- ▶ Lessons
 - Provide job search services that are easily accessible to clients.
 - Recruit employers for subsidized work placements who are willing to hire program participants.
 - Begin job placement early.
 - Encourage timely entry into unsubsidized jobs, allowing additional time for those with more barriers.
- ▶ Challenge—Balancing the needs of employers with the needs of clients.
- ▶ Lessons
 - Educate employers about the program goals and structure.
 - Provide resources and supports to employers and clients.
 - Prepare clients for work before placing them in an unsubsidized job.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The passage of the Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) shifted the emphasis of the nation's welfare system from providing cash assistance to helping welfare recipients achieve self-sufficiency, primarily through work. This emphasis on work, combined with a relatively strong economy, has contributed to more than a 50 percent decline in the welfare caseload since PRWORA's implementation in 1996 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2002). As caseloads decline, there is growing concern that families who remain on the welfare caseload will need more assistance to find employment than those who have already left. Individuals with little or no work history, limited education, low basic skills, logistical barriers, and personal and family challenges are among those who continue to receive cash assistance or are otherwise unemployed. These hard-to-employ individuals lead complex lives and often are involved with multiple social service agencies. The approaching federal time limit increases the urgency for helping them to become steadily employed. Once ineligible for cash assistance, it is unclear how these families will fare.

Georgia policymakers have long recognized the importance of helping hard-to-employ individuals find jobs before they exhaust their TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) benefits. In 2000, the state allocated \$18.6 million to design and implement an intensive transitional jobs program for hard-to-employ welfare recipients approaching Georgia's 48-month welfare time limit. Georgia is one of the first states in the nation to design a transitional jobs program targeted to TANF families facing welfare time limits and one of the few that has implemented such a program statewide. The foundation for the GoodWorks! program was established long before its actual implementation. In designing Georgia's state welfare plan for federal welfare reform, then Governor Zell Miller promised Michael Thurmond, the state welfare administrator at the time, that if he implemented a "work first" model and achieved TANF savings by reducing the caseload, the savings would be reinvested to provide intensive services for hard-to-employ welfare recipients. A 58 percent reduction in the TANF caseload, combined with unspent Welfare-to-Work funds,

created the means to implement GoodWorks!¹ An increasing proportion of hard-to-employ families among the remaining TANF caseload and the approaching welfare time limit created a sense of urgency for implementing an intensive program model that emphasized the importance of work while acknowledging the fact that some people need more support than others to be successful in the paid labor market.

This study, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research with support from the Annie E. Casey and Smith Richardson foundations, uses a mix of qualitative and quantitative data sources to provide an in-depth look at the design, implementation, and service delivery of the Georgia GoodWorks! program. Results from this study broaden our understanding of employment programs that provide a safety-net for families reaching the end of their welfare time limits, and the use of transitional employment for hard-to-employ welfare recipients.

This report is divided into five chapters. This chapter provides an overview of the GoodWorks! program model and its origins. It then outlines the research design and methods. Chapter II identifies key components of GoodWorks! and how it differs from traditional “work first” programs. In Chapter III, we discuss the framework for administering and providing services and how agencies and staff work together to operate the program. Also described are the overall program costs and funding sources used to pay for services. In Chapter IV, using administrative data and information gathered from focus groups, we describe key program outcomes and clients’ experiences with GoodWorks!. In the final chapter, we highlight the program’s accomplishments, challenges, and lessons learned.

OVERVIEW OF THE GOODWORKS! PROGRAM

What Is It?

GoodWorks! uses a supported employment model to teach hard-to-employ welfare recipients to work. Clients spend between six to nine months in a paid work placement in a structured work environment. While working, intensive case managers (referred to as “personal advisors”) and job coaches provide clients with individualized support to address barriers to employment and teach them healthy workplace behaviors. The program model builds heavily on techniques used to help disabled individuals find and maintain employment. Key program components include:

- In-depth assessment to uncover barriers to employment
- Subsidized supported employment to give clients work experience in a structured setting

¹ Between 1994 and 2002, the TANF caseload in Georgia dropped from 141,000 to 54,000 families.

-
- Intensive personal support to help clients manage their personal and work lives
 - Job coaching to teach clients how to work and succeed in a work environment
 - Job development and placement services that emphasize placing clients in jobs that fit their work interests, skills, and circumstances
 - Long-term follow up to help clients stay employed

Who Is Served by GoodWorks!?

GoodWorks! targets hard-to-employ welfare recipients who are near or have reached Georgia's 48-month welfare time limit and are not participating in a work or training activity. Welfare recipients who have received TANF for longer than 30 months are eligible for GoodWorks!. Targeted individuals have little or no work experience, limited education, and personal and family challenges that interfere with work but do not preclude them from working. Program administrators indicate that the structured and supported approach used in GoodWorks! is especially appropriate for welfare-dependent individuals who are generational welfare recipients, have criminal histories that make employers reluctant to hire them, and have other barriers to employment that are amenable to intervention.

Designing the Program

The impetus for creating GoodWorks! came out of growing concern for welfare recipients approaching Georgia's 48-month welfare time limit. In Georgia, the first families were scheduled to reach the welfare time limit in January 2001. According to policymakers, the design of GoodWorks! was guided by three critical questions:

How do we stop the time-limit clock? The goal was to create an intensive employment program to help families approaching the time limit to save their remaining months and to provide an alternative income for families whose time limit had expired. Providing a paid work placement replaced the TANF benefit with a paycheck but still provided structure and support for addressing barriers to employment and developing healthy workplace behaviors.

How do we encourage agencies to work together? State program administrators mandated that local agencies collaborate in administering and providing program services. GoodWorks! is structured such that the state funds the intensive supportive services and client wages; other program components are provided by various agencies at the local level. The goal for local sites is to identify existing resources and bundle them in a seamless process for administering and providing services.

How do we obtain funding to support the program? State administrators primarily use reinvested TANF savings to fund the program. State formula and competitive Welfare-to-Work funds also were used in the initial program implementation.

The development of GoodWorks! was an iterative process between state and local administrators. Using a “top-down, bottom-up” approach, the state leveraged resources for the pilot site, while the pilot site provided “flesh to the bones.” Under Governor Roy Barnes’ direction, Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Commissioner Michael Thurmond coordinated the design and implementation of the program. At the state level, Commissioner Thurmond developed a general vision of GoodWorks! and selected Richmond County as a local pilot site to develop the program model. Richmond County was selected for its history of operating effective collaborative partnerships and for the ability of local program administrators to think outside the box. Commissioner Thurmond and Richmond County program administrators communicated frequently to conceptualize GoodWorks! and address resource needs. The GoodWorks! pilot program was implemented in February 2000 and expanded statewide about a year later.

Program designers focused on identifying and coordinating existing resources at the local level. State program administrators already had begun reinvesting TANF funds to address the needs of the hard-to-employ several years before GoodWorks!. For example, using TANF funds, the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) contracted with Vocational Rehabilitation to provide in-depth assessments for long-term welfare recipients.² Also using TANF funds, DFCS developed interagency agreements with the Division of Substance Abuse, Division of Mental Health, and the Division of Mental Retardation (for learning disabilities) to provide specialized treatment for welfare recipients. The goal in designing GoodWorks! was to use its funds to contract with local supported employment service providers to provide supported employment opportunities and to pay client wages. Local sites would be required to identify existing services and resources to supplement the program. This approach forced collaboration at the local level.

Finally, GoodWorks! was intended to help hard-to-employ TANF recipients enter the paid labor market. This required an alternative approach to employment services that was more intensive than “work first” programs. At the time GoodWorks! was being developed, Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia and the Central Savannah River Area was providing work activities to hard-to-employ welfare recipients through a Welfare-to-Work grant. Goodwill, which for years had been providing supported employment to Vocational Rehabilitation clients with disabilities, found that hard-to-employ welfare recipients have similar types of visible and hidden disabilities as Vocational Rehabilitation clients. The supported employment model that had been successful with Vocational Rehabilitation clients appeared appropriate for helping hard-to-employ welfare recipients get and keep jobs.

² In each of the past three years, Vocational Rehabilitation has received \$6 million to conduct in-depth employability assessments with 5,000 long-term TANF recipients. These recipients include those who have received cash assistance longer than 30 months.

GoodWorks! Infrastructure

At the state level, GDOL has primary responsibility for coordinating the program. The Department of Human Resources and other agencies work collaboratively with GDOL to operate the program. GDOL hired a GoodWorks! director and eight facilitators to oversee services at the local level. Program directors and facilitators have responsibility for defining the model, contracting with local employment service providers, providing technical support, and overseeing data collection.

At the local level, GoodWorks! is designed and administered by a GoodWorks! collaborative, a group of agencies within each community that provides a range of services to clients. GDOL, Vocational Rehabilitation, WIA/WtW (Workforce Investment Act/Welfare-to-Work) administrative entities, and DFCS are mandated partners in administering and providing GoodWorks!. Other agencies join the collaborative depending on the services they provide. A contracted employment service provider experienced with providing supported employment services usually coordinates the day-to-day operation.

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to learn more about a potentially “promising practice” in providing employment services to hard-to-employ welfare recipients. The use of a supported employment program model, the collaborative approach to administering and providing services, and targeting services to those nearing or who have reached the welfare time limit all contributed to our interest in the GoodWorks! program. In designing this study, we intended to describe the program, rather than to evaluate it. Our hope is that information from this study will provide insight for policymakers who may be interested in implementing similar services, practitioners who serve hard-to-employ welfare recipients, and researchers interested in studying and evaluating GoodWorks! or similar programs.

Data Collection

We obtained data from three primary sources. First, we gathered information from comprehensive site visits to five sites across Georgia. Each site visit lasted about three days and was conducted by a team of two MPR researchers. We held semi-structured interviews with GoodWorks! program managers and staff, agency partners, Vocational Rehabilitation assessment staff, job developers, and other key players involved in GoodWorks! service delivery. We conducted focus groups with current and former program participants, work-site supervisors, and employers. We gathered written materials describing the administrative structure, assessment tools, service delivery pathways, and program forms (e.g., referral forms, reporting forms, and releases of information). We also requested reports summarizing client characteristics, placement rates, and other performance measures.

Second, we conducted in-depth interviews with state officials and program administrators in Atlanta. Two MPR researchers met with commissioners from GDOL and the Department of Human Resources and administrators from DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, and GDOL Field Services. We met with state GoodWorks! administrators and other GDOL employees. These interviews gave us a broad picture of the GoodWorks!

program. We also gained insight into the early design of the model, how GoodWorks! fits into the range of services targeted at hard-to-employ welfare recipients, the relationship between the state and local level in providing services, and the future direction of the program. We learned about the key challenges and lessons learned at the state level in providing services.

Finally, we requested state MIS administrative data describing client characteristics, program participation, employment outcomes, and other related information. Local sites submit these data to GDOL for the purpose of monitoring and tracking program performance. We augmented these data with additional data on job placements from the local sites. We use these data to report program performance and to compare program performance across the study sites.

Site Selection

GDOL selected the five study sites based on the three criteria described below. Tables I.1 and I.2 summarize the features of each site.

Experience in providing GoodWorks! services. Each of the study sites had been fully operating GoodWorks! for at least a year. They demonstrated program stability, because they experienced little turnover among collaborative agency administrators, local program managers, and staff.

Range of contracted service providers. Because of its long history of providing supported employment and its presence throughout Georgia, Goodwill Industries is a key partner in many but not all of the GoodWorks! programs across the state. As a result, GDOL included some sites served by Goodwill Industries and some sites served by other local agencies experienced in operating supported employment programs. In two of the sites, GDOL contracted with Goodwill, in two sites GDOL contracted with other supported employment agencies, and in one site GDOL contracted with Goodwill and another service provider.

A mix of rural and urban sites. Because GoodWorks! builds on existing community resources, it operates differently in every community. The challenges of operating the program are different in urban and rural areas. Using a mix allowed us to gather information about how GoodWorks! operates under different geographic and resource conditions. We included one rural site, which currently serves eight individuals, to learn about how services are structured and provided when serving a small number of participants. The rest of the sites serve at least 100 clients and operate in urban or semi-urban areas (see Table I.2).

Table I.1. Study Site Features

Five sites were selected for the study. Appendix A provides a more detailed description of the study sites.

Bibb County (Macon). Bibb County is a semi-urban community in the heart of Georgia. Macon has many employers providing entry-level jobs, including GEICO Insurance, Medical Center of Central Georgia, and Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corp. According to local program administrators, underemployment is a major problem in the area. Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia and the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) is the primary employment service provider for GoodWorks! in Bibb County. In addition, Goodwill Industries and the one-stop career center are co-located in the same building, which improves the access to job placement services.

Clarke County (Athens). Athens is a small college town that relies heavily on the economic opportunities generated by the University of Georgia. Since the program's inception, GoodWorks! has served about 32 clients. In Clarke County, GDOL contracted with two supported employment service providers; however, only one agency, Kelley Diversified Industries, has remained a GoodWorks! placement option. Agencies serving TANF recipients in Clarke County have well-established relationships that were formed with the implementation of the County's Welfare-to-Work program.

DeKalb County (Decatur). Located just outside Atlanta, DeKalb resources and job opportunities look much like those of Fulton County. With just under 666,000 people, DeKalb is the second most populated county in Georgia. Goodwill Industries of North Georgia is the primary supported employment service provider. DeKalb County has the second highest TANF caseload of the study sites, however, they have the lowest proportion of TANF recipients that have received assistance longer than 30 months (16.9 percent).

Fulton County (areas surrounding Atlanta). The Fulton County program is divided between Atlanta and the surrounding areas with separate administrative structures and service providers. We visited the county's surrounding areas, rather than Atlanta. Fulton County has a unique approach to service delivery. Instead of contracting with local vendors to handle program management, case management, recruiting, and job development, Fulton County hires staff to manage these tasks and contracts out only the work component. The county uses a mix of work placements, referring clients to an employment service provider depending on their level of job readiness. Service providers in Fulton County are Bobby Dodd Industries, J. Stinson & Associates, and WORKTEC.

Richmond County (Augusta). Richmond County, site of the initial pilot, has been operating GoodWorks! the longest. It has a history of providing services in a collaborative partnership. And it has one of the highest TANF caseloads in the state. Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia and the CSRA is the primary employment service provider for GoodWorks!, serving about 375 clients. Golden Harvest Food Bank is another provider, contracted to serve 24 clients per year. (Since the site visit, ARBOR, Inc. was added as an additional employment service provider.) In Richmond County, more than half (54.1 percent) of TANF recipients have received cash assistance for longer than 30 months.

Table I.2. Study Site Operating Information

Features	Bibb County	Clarke County	DeKalb County	Fulton County	Richmond County
TANF caseload	1,228	397	1,454	5,935	1,216
Number of clients 30+ months	333	80	246	1,951	658
Total number of clients served	223	32	167	281	456
Number of current clients	134	8	114	180	375
Program implementation date	December 2000	January 2001	December 2000	January 2001	February 2000

^aIn Fulton County, GoodWorks! is divided into Atlanta and the outlying areas. This number reflects the total number of TANF recipients in Fulton County.

CHAPTER II

KEY COMPONENTS OF GOODWORKS!

The cornerstone of state and federal welfare reform is a “work first” approach emphasizing rapid entry into the labor market. This model is effective for some clients, but others require more intensive help to overcome personal and family challenges that interfere with work. Incorporating the principles of supported employment for persons with disabilities, GoodWorks! is a comprehensive work-based program that provides enhanced supports to expand clients’ ability to work and manage their personal lives. It is an alternative to “work first” programs for the hard-to-employ. In recent years, researchers have uncovered high rates of hidden disabilities among welfare recipients (Danziger et al. 1999; Loprest and Zedlewski 2002; Johnson and Meckstroth 1998; Olson and Pavetti 1996). GoodWorks! provides hard-to-employ welfare recipients with an employment approach that is responsive to their intensive needs. GoodWorks! is based on the belief that many hard-to-employ individuals can and will work with the right types and amount of supports. Key components include aggressive outreach, screening and assessment, paid work placements, enhanced supports, job placement, and long-term follow up. GoodWorks! incorporates these key components into a service delivery process that extends at least a year after clients find unsubsidized employment (see box on the next page).

AGGRESSIVE OUTREACH TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION

GoodWorks! emphasizes aggressive outreach with the intention of “selling” the program and generating enthusiasm among potential clients. Hard-to-employ welfare recipients have been found to be less likely to participate in program or work activities (Hamilton and Scrivener 1999). However, since extensive outreach activities are typically time consuming and expensive, few traditional employment programs implement them. As part of the GoodWorks! model, outreach recruiters or other GoodWorks! staff interview clients in their homes for 30 to 45 minutes, informing them about the program, explaining how their lives might be different once they begin working, and inviting them to orientation. At study sites that hire outreach recruiters, these workers often are former welfare recipients who can relate to being on welfare. Outreach also is used to identify inappropriate referrals for those not interested, available, or able to participate, determine clients’ immediate service needs, and begin the process of helping clients access work supports.

GoodWorks! Service Delivery

Referral to GoodWorks! Most participants are referred to GoodWorks! by their welfare case managers. Other ways clients may be referred to GoodWorks! include DFCS case conferences (for sanctioned clients and those approaching the time limits) and Vocational Rehabilitation case conferences (conducted in some sites to review assessment results).

Outreach and Recruiting. GoodWorks! is a voluntary program. Recruiters or other GoodWorks! staff invite referred clients to GoodWorks! by conducting home visits. The outreach interview, which lasts between 30 to 45 minutes, informs clients about the program, helps identify service needs, and generates enthusiasm for the program.

Program Orientation. Orientation in most sites is held at least every two weeks and varies in length depending on the study site. The purpose is to provide clients with an overview of GoodWorks!, introduce the staff and agency partners, and to drug screen clients and conduct criminal background checks. During orientation, clients are assessed to identify their service needs and assign them to a work placement.

Work Evaluation. Immediately after orientation, clients enter work evaluation, a work preparatory period that lasts between 3 to 4 weeks. Clients begin a structured work placement in which they work 20 hours per week. GoodWorks! staff assesses clients' work and personal needs. At the end of work evaluation, clients attend a case conference with GoodWorks! staff and agency partners to develop a Career Action Plan that outlines long- and short-term employment goals, service needs, and recommendations for work adjustment placement. Moreover, clients are encouraged to sign a request terminating TANF assistance in order to save their remaining months.

Work Adjustment. The case conference at the end of work evaluation marks the beginning of work adjustment. During work adjustment, the time clients spend working increases from 20 to 30 hours per week and their wages increase from \$5.15 to about \$6.50 per hour. GoodWorks! staff work with clients to address barriers to employment and develop healthy workplace behaviors. Clients may participate in some supplemental activities, such as job club or job readiness workshops, but the work experience and individual coaching and interaction with GoodWorks! staff are the primary focus of work adjustment.

Intensive Personal Support. Job coaches, personal advisors, and work-site supervisors provide intensive support to program participants throughout service delivery. They teach clients job skills, help them develop healthy workplace behaviors, identify and address barriers to employment, and provide personal encouragement and support.

Job Placement. The process for finding clients unsubsidized jobs varies by study site. Clients typically access job placement services through GDOL's one-stop career centers. Some of the local employment service providers have well-developed job placement resources whereby clients can search for jobs in areas where they complete their subsidized work placement. Job search resources generally include job search workshops, computer resource rooms, job boards, assistance with resume writing, and practice with job interviews.

Job Retention. GoodWorks! staff follow up with each client for at least one year after they get a job to help them keep it. Personal advisors contact clients at least monthly to see how they are doing. GoodWorks! staff (e.g., personal advisors and job coaches) mediate between employers and workers before clients are about to quit or be fired, help clients access supportive services, and assist them with job search activities if they lose their jobs.

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENTS USED TO INDIVIDUALIZE SERVICE DELIVERY

Information gathered during formal and informal assessments is used to create individualized service plans for clients. Traditional employment programs focus on gathering basic employment information, such as past work experience, educational background, job skills, and employment interests. They may screen all TANF clients initially for barriers to employment or assess clients for barriers after clients have had difficulty getting and keeping jobs. These assessments often are limited and are conducted by TANF case managers with varying levels of assessment skills. In comparison, GoodWorks! assessments are up-front and more in-depth than most traditional employment programs. For example, GoodWorks! uses in-depth assessments conducted by staff at Vocational Rehabilitation at the beginning of service delivery to identify visible and hidden barriers to employment. Other screening and assessments are used to supplement this up-front assessment. In addition, information is gathered from multiple sources, which has been found to be useful with uncovering hidden barriers (Thompson, Van Ness, and O'Brien 2001). GoodWorks! clients are assessed in a variety of ways, including:

Vocational rehabilitation assessments. All TANF clients who have received TANF for longer than 30 months are referred to Vocational Rehabilitation for an in-depth employment assessment and psychological evaluation. The assessments, typically conducted before program referral, provide GoodWorks! staff with information about clients' employability and hidden disabilities. Assessment information is used in case planning and, in some areas, may be used to identify clients appropriate for GoodWorks!.³ Clients with disabilities may access Vocational Rehabilitation services.

Vocational Rehabilitation Assessments for Long-Term TANF Recipients

For the past three years, the Division of Family and Children Services contracted with Vocational Rehabilitation to conduct 5,000 assessments per year with TANF recipients approaching the welfare time limit. These assessments are used to identify barriers to employment, determine clients' employability, and recommend service options. Assessments are designed specifically for the long-term TANF population. Assessments include four main components: (1) initial intake; (2) a self-administered employability assessment (set of batteries and inventories measuring job interests, aptitudes, and barriers to employment); (3) psychological evaluation (psychologists administer WAIS III, WRAT 3, Beck Depression Scale, Mental Status Exam, a basic IQ test, and a grade level estimate for reading and math); and (4) a request for clients' medical records describing physical health. The information is compiled into a report that describes general findings, clinical diagnoses (where applicable), and service recommendations. Findings are shared with welfare and GoodWorks! staff.

³ In DeKalb County, Vocational Rehabilitation holds an interagency case conference to review each in-depth assessment. Based on this review, clients may be referred to GoodWorks!.

Work evaluation. During work evaluation, clients are assigned to a work placement at a local employment service provider where they interact daily with work site supervisors and GoodWorks! staff. The staff directly observe clients at work and gathers information from work site supervisors about clients' work skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Assessment information is shared during a formal interagency case staffing to determine the clients' service needs.

Specialized screenings. Clients complete a drug screening and criminal background check during orientation. The purpose is to identify individuals with severe barriers to employment and to address them before they begin the program. Individuals who test positive for drug use are referred to a DFCS substance abuse treatment provider. Clients with criminal histories may be federally bonded to minimize the risk to employers or they are linked to certain types of jobs or both.⁴

Employability assessments (individual or group). Employment service providers or other agencies may use employability assessments to identify career interests and uncover barriers to employment, and/or to determine client's career aptitudes and job skills. In Fulton County, one employment service provider completes a three-day assessment workshop for GoodWorks! participants. The DFCS office in Bibb County provides three different types of assessments—a work readiness assessment, vocational assessment, and a four-hour assessment workshop offered by a mental health service provider.

Overall, GoodWorks! assessments are ongoing and purposeful and occur throughout service delivery. GoodWorks! participants are assessed while they are working and interacting with GoodWorks! staff. Assessment information is used to identify what clients need to work, how they are progressing toward work, and what types of jobs best match their needs and interests.

CLIENTS LEARN TO WORK BY WORKING

The goal of “work first” programs is to immediately link clients to work. In contrast, GoodWorks! clients complete a structured paid work placement for between six and nine months before they are linked to permanent employment. The GoodWorks! model emphasizes teaching clients to work while they are working in a supported work environment. Using the motto “work is the classroom,” staff are encouraged to use real work experiences to teach clients alternative ways to handle workplace situations. The desired outcome is to allow clients to make mistakes and correct them without jeopardizing their employment. Behavior and job performance that might lead to clients being fired from unsubsidized jobs are used to teach clients how to adjust accordingly. The expectation for clients is that they may need more support initially but that they will perform as reliable workers over time.

⁴ Employers who hire bonded individuals with a criminal background may be reimbursed up to \$25,000 for damages incurred by these employees.

Clients' work placement is divided into two program periods—work evaluation and work adjustment. Work evaluation begins immediately after client orientation and corresponds with clients being assigned to a work placement. The purpose of work evaluation is to assess clients' needs and prepare them for work. After the 3-4 week work evaluation period, clients participate in an interagency case conference to review assessment results, develop an employment plan, and close their cash assistance case. This case conference marks the end of work evaluation and the beginning of work adjustment. During work adjustment, clients continue at a subsidized work placement. The focus of work adjustment is to address barriers to employment and to teach clients job skills and appropriate workplace behaviors while they are working. Work adjustment ends when clients leave their work placement for an unsubsidized job.

Work placements are generally entry-level positions. Types of work placements include light assembly, cashiering, clerical positions, and child care provider. In most cases, the level of supervision of GoodWorks! participants in their work placement exceeds that of most entry-level jobs. Agencies providing work placements are encouraged to treat GoodWorks! participants like other entry-level workers. Placements may be in a group setting such as a Goodwill Industries store or a production facility that provides employment for disabled individuals or in individual placements in a range of government, nonprofit or for-profit settings.

Unlike most job search or work experience programs, GoodWorks! clients are paid to work, allowing them to close their TANF assistance cases and still receive income. Wages, paid using TANF and some Welfare-to-Work funds, are determined at the local level and generally range from \$5.15 to \$8.52 per hour.⁵ Wages and hours are lower, typically \$5.15 per hour for 20 hours per week, during the work evaluation phase to allow clients to continue to qualify for their TANF grants. Wages increase after work evaluation, when clients sign away their TANF grants and begin work adjustment. The number of hours clients work increases from 20 to 30 hours per week.⁶ Clients may qualify for Earned Income Tax Credit, which significantly increases their income.

WORK SUPPORTS PREPARE CLIENTS FOR STEADY EMPLOYMENT

In Georgia, DFCS case managers have primary responsibility for helping clients find jobs and determining initial and ongoing eligibility. Typically, clients are referred to GDOL one-stop career centers where they—along with other job seekers—look for work. High caseloads (between 250 to 300 cases per DFCS case manager) make it difficult to individualize employment services to client needs and monitor participation in work

⁵ Wages for subsidized work placements, as mandated by the Fair Labor Standard Act, are required to be the same amount paid to entry-level workers in the same position. This accounts for the variation between and, in some cases, within local sites.

⁶ There is some variation in the number of hours clients participate in their work placement. For example, clients in Bibb County may work up to 40 hours per week.

activities. The welfare office may provide work supports and specialized treatment, but clients may not be aware these services exist or how to access them. Enhanced support distinguishes GoodWorks! from traditional employment programs in Georgia and in other states and localities. The amount and intensity of staff support through GoodWorks! not only exceeds traditional employment programs but also is more than most programs targeting the hard-to-employ. This is a benefit to GoodWorks! clients because many of them require additional support to get and keep their jobs.

Logistical Supports to Help With Day-to-Day Work Needs

Immediate entry into work requires that clients access logistical supports to help them stay on the job. Lack of child care and transportation, according to GoodWorks! staff, are the most pervasive barriers to employment and continue to be a challenge even with the support GoodWorks! provides. GoodWorks! staff help clients access supportive services available to all TANF recipients, such as child care, Medicaid, transportation, and support service payments for work-related needs (e.g., clothing, shoes, eyeglasses, and tools).⁷ GoodWorks! clients are eligible for supportive services until TANF case closure, with child care and transportation extending further.⁸ In some of the study sites, staff provides or helps clients access supportive services from other agencies once their TANF cases are closed. In Bibb County, an employment service provider offers work-related clothing, shoes, and other incidentals. Clients may be referred to local community based organizations for utility payments, baby diapers, and other emergency needs. “Dress for Success” in Fulton and Richmond counties give GoodWorks! clients professional clothing for work.

Specialized Treatment to Deal With Severe Personal and Family Challenges

GoodWorks! and partner staff are encouraged to identify when clients need specialized treatment (e.g., mental health, substance abuse, Vocational Rehabilitation) and to help clients access existing services. Dealing with serious personal and family challenges in many cases requires specialized treatment. As with logistical supports, GoodWorks! emphasizes using existing resources rather than providing them separately for GoodWorks! clients. Specialized treatment is available in each of the study sites. According to GoodWorks! staff in each of the study sites, there are few problems accessing specialized services. The primary challenge is encouraging clients to participate in them.

⁷ Employment service providers may be reimbursed for up to \$200 to pay for supportive services for GoodWorks! participants.

⁸ Clients may be eligible for transitional child care for up to 12 months and transportation assistance for up to 3 months after TANF case closure. Additionally, clients may be eligible for “working poor” child care assistance and Wheels-to-Work assistance after their TANF case is closed.

Personal Advisors Help Clients Develop Skills to Balance Work and Family

Program administrators, staff, and clients describe personal advisors as the heart of the GoodWorks! program. At orientation, clients are assigned personal advisors (intensive case managers) who are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.⁹ They typically manage between 15 and 30 cases, allowing them to work individually with clients. Their role is described as “helping clients get a handle on their lives” and “doing whatever it takes to help people get and keep a job.” Personal advisors meet with clients in their homes, attend clients’ court appointments, accompany parents to meetings at their children’s schools, and assist in a variety of other settings. Over time, personal advisors become key sources of support for clients. Their involvement gradually decreases as clients become more independent. Some of the roles and responsibilities of personal advisors include:

Identifying barriers to employment and accessing services to address them.

Personal advisors identify and address barriers to employment to help clients get and keep jobs. To accomplish this, they frequently meet with clients, especially initially, to assess their immediate and long-term needs. They obtain information about barriers by building a trusting relationship with clients and from in-depth assessments, work site supervisors and other GoodWorks! staff. Personal advisors indicate that clients vary in their willingness to disclose personal and family challenges that interfere with work and in their willingness to address them.

Teaching clients basic life skills. Clients’ personal lives often interfere with work and, in some cases, contribute to job loss. Personal advisors teach clients basic problem-solving and life skills to help them organize, prioritize, and manage their lives. Some of the skill-building activities include arranging back-up transportation and child care, determining financial priorities and developing a budget, and learning effective ways to communicate and manage anger. These life and problem-solving skills are intended to help clients balance their work and personal lives.

Monitoring client participation and progress. Personal advisors in some study sites indicate that they use a “tough love” approach in which they focus on consistency, accountability, and unconditional support. Personal advisors talk about the importance of reinforcing clients’ positive behaviors, even the small steps, and consistently confronting the negative ones. One personal advisor says she “wins the right to be involved in the client’s life by being consistent.” Most personal advisors actively monitor clients’ work attendance, punctuality, and progress toward employment. They hold clients accountable for their actions, and in many cases, help change their behavior.

Building clients’ self-esteem and self-worth. GoodWorks! participants often have limited support networks and struggle with issues of low self-esteem and self-worth. During

⁹ In Clarke County, the case manager is available Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. According to GDOL, all personal advisors are required to be available to GoodWorks! participants 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

focus groups with current and former GoodWorks! participants, they often talked about how personal advisors are “helpful, nice, and supportive.” Personal advisors are there to convince clients they can succeed when they don’t believe they can. By celebrating small successes, they keep clients motivated and help to build their self-esteem and self-worth. Personal advisors also keep clients looking toward the future rather than dwelling on the mistakes they have made in the past.

Personal Advisors at Work: A Case Study

The support personal advisors provide varies from one client to the next. Below are some of the ways in which a personal advisor helped a client with limited education and work history overcome personal and family challenges and logistical barriers to work.

- Encouraged the client to earn her GED
- Assisted with clothing and car repairs
- Talked with the client’s 18-year-old son about employment and education options
- Problem-solved around several crisis situations
- Referred the client to mental health treatment
- Helped the client move to a new apartment
- Coordinated services with Vocational Rehabilitation, mental health, Child Protective Services, and DFCS
- Helped the client deal with legal issues

Job Coaches Teach Clients How to Work

Job coaches play an important role in reshaping clients’ workplace behaviors and developing basic job skills to help them stay employed. According to GoodWorks! staff, most GoodWorks! participants have little or no work experience. Their limited understanding of workplace norms may have contributed to job loss in the past. For example, a client may be consistently late for work, which has led to termination in the past. A job coach may identify why the client is late and explore alternative ways to resolve the problem. Job coaches may shadow workers for a few days to see how they are performing on the job and help with additional training needs. One job coach helped train a client who was having difficulty learning the telephone system at her work placement. Job coaches support not only clients but also employers. They mediate workplace issues between clients and employers, helping with workplace adjustments and resolving interpersonal conflict, especially if clients are about to quit or be fired. Like personal advisors, job coaches carry a small caseload of between 15 to 25 cases.

Work site supervisors also assist with job coaching responsibilities. In work placements with agencies in the community, the quality and amount of supervision depends on the employer. Supervisors at group sites, especially those hired by the employment service provider, tend to be consistently involved with the client. They usually have experience and training in working with individuals with disabilities.

Job Readiness Activities to Prepare Clients for Work and Remind Them the End Goal Is Unsubsidized, Steady Employment

Although the primary emphasis of GoodWorks! is work, the programs do provide some job readiness activities to help prepare clients for work. These activities are mandatory for

participants (see Table II.1). For example, clients in Fulton County participate in a week-long motivational workshop during work evaluation. In Richmond County, individuals spend 4 to 5 hours per week in job readiness and life skills workshops. In Clarke County, clients participate in life skills classes for 1½ hours Mondays through Fridays during work evaluation. Clients in DeKalb County meet each Monday at 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for six weeks of motivational classes. Job readiness and life skills workshops are held weekly in Bibb County. In all of the study sites, the job readiness activities are similar to activities found in many “work first” programs. During focus groups, clients expressed a range of opinions about how helpful they thought these activities were. In one site, clients thought the motivational classes were especially helpful. Many thought that the activities were somewhat helpful; however, they wanted to be paid for the time spent in class. Overall, work preparation activities appear to play a relatively minor role in preparing clients for work compared with their work placements.

WHEN READY, CLIENTS ARE MATCHED TO PERMANENT JOBS

GoodWorks’ ultimate goal is to place clients in appropriate jobs they likely will keep. The emphasis of GoodWorks! is to use assessment information to match clients to jobs that fit their work interests, job skills, and personal circumstances. In practice, the limited availability of jobs in each of the study sites decreases the ability of GoodWorks! staff to match clients to jobs based on these criteria. However, job matching is the desired approach and a concept emphasized by program administrators.

Table II.1. Work Preparation Activities During Work Evaluation and Work Adjustment

	Bibb County	Clarke County	DeKalb County	Fulton County	Richmond County
Work Evaluation					
Types of activities	Job readiness classes	Life skills classes	Motivational classes ^a	Motivational workshop	Work Ethic 101 Computer classes GED “Inspirations” support group (optional)
Required hours	Daily hours 2-4	Daily hours	1½ Mondays 9 a.m.-3 p.m. for 6 weeks	1 week	4-5 hours per week
Work Adjustment					
Types activities	Job readiness Life skills workshops	Monday work site meeting	Job club	Job readiness Life skills workshops GDOL career center (1 day per week)	Work Ethic 101 Computer classes GED “Inspirations” support group (optional)
Required number of hours	5 hours per week	30 minutes per week	Mondays 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Workshops vary by provider	4-5 hours per week

Study sites tap into existing job placement resources rather than hire GoodWorks! job placement staff. To get a job, clients may need resources for identifying job leads, assistance with resume writing, coaching for job interviews, and other types of supports. Employment service providers rarely hire job placement staff exclusively for GoodWorks! participants. Typically, employment service providers use their own staff to provide job search assistance or use job developers from other agencies (such as GDOL or the local workforce board). Tapping into existing resources provides a broad range of placement services for GoodWorks! participants.

Study sites use a mix of job placement resources to help clients find jobs. In all of the study sites, clients have access to GDOL services, but sites vary in how much they rely on them.¹⁰ Two sites rely primarily on GDOL career centers for job search activities. In Bibb County, the one-stop career center is in the same facility as the employment service provider. Fulton County requires clients to spend one day a week during work evaluation and work adjustment at the career center identifying job leads and participating in job readiness workshops. Other sites have employment service providers with well-developed job placement resources. In Richmond County, GoodWorks! clients access job search resources at the Goodwill “Job Connection,” located in the same facility where they complete their work placement. In DeKalb County, clients participate in a weekly job club each Monday to learn about job leads, prepare resumes, and practice interviewing skills. They have an extensive on-site employment resource facility. In Clarke County, clients are referred to the local GDOL career center and receive help with finding jobs from the local employment service provider.

Weekly Job Club in DeKalb County

In DeKalb County, GoodWorks! participants are required to participate in a job club every Monday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The purpose is to discuss work related issues, such as workplace behaviors, personal hygiene, and what employers are looking for in entry-level workers. It is used to help clients find work. Job developers share information with GoodWorks! participants about job leads and discuss strategies for employment. Participants practice interviewing and receive help improving their resumes. Job coaches are responsible for organizing and carrying out job club, but personal advisors and job developers frequently attend. Guest speakers from the community are often invited to speak. Participating in job club from the beginning of GoodWorks! reinforces that the end goal is employment.

¹⁰ GoodWorks! service providers are provided access the GDOL state job bank through a computer link.

GOODWORKS! STAFF FOLLOW UP WITH CLIENTS AFTER THEY GET JOBS

Many employment programs for welfare recipients have limited follow up after their clients become employed. Or else, job retention services may be provided but are rarely used. In studying job retention services, Strawn and Martinson (2000) found that soft skills training, entry-level job skills, life skills, and frequent follow-up after clients get a job may improve job retention. With GoodWorks!, job retention begins at enrollment and extends at least a year after clients start working. According to GoodWorks! staff, consistent and frequent job coaching over time helps instill healthy workplace behaviors. During the program, the goal is to help clients address barriers that interfere with employment and develop life skills and problem-solving skills to address future barriers. The relationship cultivated over time between clients and program staff appears to encourage participation in job retention services. Once clients are employed, GoodWorks! staff generally contact clients at least monthly to see how they are managing their jobs and families, act as a mediator between employers and workers before clients are about to quit or be fired, and help clients access supportive services and other service needs (e.g. mental health counseling). Clients who lose their jobs may come back for job search activities, and in some cases, may be placed in another subsidized job.

Some study sites offer work incentives to clients who stay employed. Both Fulton and DeKalb counties provide a \$150 job retention bonus to clients who keep their jobs.¹¹ In addition, DFCS provides a one time Transitional Work Support Payment (TWSP) of \$195 to all TANF recipients who obtain full- or part-time employment.

In sum, GoodWorks! is based on a supported employment model used with individuals who have disabilities but is tailored to the needs of welfare recipients. The program incorporates in-depth assessments, paid work placements, job coaching, access to work supports, job matching, and long-term follow up from the supported employment model. Aggressive outreach and the intensity of case management provided by personal advisors reflect the needs of hard-to-employ welfare recipients. Overall, the enhanced support and individualized approach makes GoodWorks! more intensive than traditional “work first” employment programs. The integration of work differentiates GoodWorks! from other programs and services designed to address the barriers of the hard-to-employ.

¹¹ Effective December 2001, clients must be employed for 30 days before receiving the job retention bonus.

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CHAPTER III

CREATING AN ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PROVIDING SERVICES

The administrative framework for GoodWorks! services is built on a foundation that brings together local agencies to coordinate and expand existing services for hard-to-employ individuals. In designing GoodWorks!, state administrators mandate that local sites identify existing services within their communities that could be used to assist GoodWorks! participants in making the transition to unsubsidized employment. Agencies that provide services to GoodWorks! participants administer the program as a collaborative partnership. GDOL contracts with one or more local agencies that provide supported employment services to manage day-to-day program operations. Sites weave together existing services and those provided by the contracted employment service provider(s) into a seamless structure for administering and providing services. This requires a collaborative relationship between the state and local level and among local agencies and GoodWorks! staff.

STATE ADMINISTRATORS DEFINE PARAMETERS IN WHICH LOCAL SITES OPERATE

GDOL is the lead agency at the state level in operating GoodWorks!. It has primary responsibility for providing employment services to welfare recipients. There are 11 state GDOL GoodWorks! staff members—a program director, 8 GoodWorks! facilitators, and 2 who provide support. They work with other agencies within the Departments of Labor and Human Resources to administer the program. GoodWorks! state staff, in collaboration with other agencies, define the parameters for negotiating and monitoring contracts with local employment service providers, leverage funds to pay for services, and provide technical assistance to local sites to improve day-to-day operations. The state and local levels have clearly delineated roles in the design and delivery of GoodWorks!, which are outlined in Table III.1. While the state gives sites flexibility to operate the program, GDOL is actively involved locally in overseeing GoodWorks! and monitoring local employment service providers.

Table III.1. State and Local Responsibilities

State Responsibilities	Local Responsibilities
Defining the program model	Organizing and managing the GoodWorks! collaborative
Identifying resources for program funding	Identifying employment service provider(s)
Contracting with local service providers	Creating an administrative structure and service delivery process
Creating and negotiating payment benchmarks	Hiring and supervising program staff
Providing technical support for designing and implementing GoodWorks!	Deciding work placement issues (e.g., type of placements, amount of client wages, etc.)
Overseeing data management (monitoring collection of client information and performance data)	Monitoring client information and performance

The eight state facilitators for GoodWorks! serve as a link between state and local levels. They disseminate information about state policy changes, share promising practices across sites, improve data management, and identify local service delivery needs. They also help solve problems at the local level. For example, state administrators helped find a way to expedite the assessment process in Bibb County when a delay in completing Vocational Rehabilitation assessments created a bottleneck in the GoodWorks! referral process.¹² In Clarke County, a facilitator intervened when there was a miscommunication between the state and local site about serving more clients than originally designated in the contract.

LOCAL SITES BUILD GOODWORKS!

GoodWorks! Collaboratives Operationalize and Administer Services at the Local Level

The program is operationalized and administered by a group of local agencies within each community called a GoodWorks! collaborative. The state identifies mandated partners for local GoodWorks! collaboratives; they include GDOL, DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, WIA/WtW administrative entities, and the contracted employment service provider(s). Local communities are encouraged to select other agencies to join the collaborative that can enhance services to GoodWorks! clients. In Bibb County, the GoodWorks! collaborative includes the mandated partners, the housing authority, the Department of Technical and Adult Education, and a mental health and substance abuse treatment provider. Fulton County has the fewest number of agencies in its collaborative: the County Office of Workforce Development and the mandated partners. At other sites, participating agencies

¹² “Expedited assessments” streamline the process by requiring only a portion of assessments to be completed before GoodWorks! program enrollment.

vary, yet they all play distinct roles in GoodWorks! and bring to the table a package of services, professional expertise, and other useful resources (see Table III.2).

Table III.2. Agencies Involved in Local GoodWorks! Collaboratives and the Services They Provide

Agency	Services Provided
GDOL (local offices)	Enters GoodWorks! referrals into MIS computer system Provides job placement services
DFCS	Refers welfare recipients to GoodWorks! Authorizes supportive services (child care and transportation) and specialized treatment (substance abuse and mental health) Coordinates Transitional Work Support Payments (TWSP) Enforces sanctions for those still receiving TANF
Vocational Rehabilitation/GDOL	Conducts in-depth assessments with long-term TANF recipients
Local workforce development board	Employer of record; coordinates payment of client wages
Contracted employment service provider	Manages day-to-day operation of GoodWorks! ^a (e.g., recruiting, work placements, intensive case management, job coaching, and job retention)
Specialized community providers	Training, mental health and substance abuse treatment services, housing assistance, child care, medical assistance

Note: The agencies involved and the services provided vary at the local level.

^a In Fulton County, the Fulton County Office of Workforce Development manages the program and shares responsibility with the contracted service providers for handling day-to-day responsibilities.

GoodWorks! collaboratives in the study sites build on existing collaborative relationships created for other program initiatives. In many communities, GoodWorks! builds on existing programs and services that emphasize interagency collaboration and coordination of services. Four of the five study sites operated similar services using Welfare-to-Work funds before GoodWorks! was implemented. These established relationships and structures streamlined the GoodWorks! design and administration process.

GoodWork! collaboratives define policies and procedures at the local level, work out glitches in service delivery, share information among agencies, and develop program goals. Collaboratives meet at least monthly to coordinate service delivery, communicating frequently through e-mails, telephone calls, and memos. Collaboratives operate differently in each of the study sites. Richmond County has developed an advisory council that solves problems involving very specific issues and makes recommendations to the collaborative. In rural Clark County, where GoodWorks! serves only eight clients, the collaborative relies

more on the employment service provider to administer services than some of the larger sites.¹³ In Bibb County, the collaborative makes most of the decisions collectively, but in Fulton County, the County Office of Workforce Development makes most of the administrative decisions, with input from the collaborative. Agency administrators across study sites indicate that operating collaboratively requires communication, trust, and a commitment to helping welfare recipients get jobs.

Service Delivery Decisions Reflect Local Needs and Resources

Local flexibility enables a service model that reflects community needs and resources. State administrators give local agencies discretion in how to provide services. In the initial design, each of the study sites looked to Richmond County, the pilot site, for ideas and advice. But agency administrators ultimately made decisions that reflected their individual communities. Local sites vary in these primary ways:

Staffing decisions. Program staffing is similar across the study sites (e.g., program manager, personal advisors, job coaches, and recruiters), although caseload size and staff responsibilities differ. In DeKalb County, personal advisors are assigned much higher caseloads, but job coaches have smaller caseloads and perform some of the responsibilities handled by personal advisors in other study sites. In Clarke County, where GoodWorks! serves just eight clients, one staff member plays several roles, including case manager, job coach, and work-site supervisor.

Roles and responsibilities of provider agencies. In most sites, one contracted employment service provider manages the full range of supported employment services. There was, however, some variation between study sites. For example, due to the high number of TANF recipients and large geographic area, Fulton County Office of Workforce Development elected to provide the recruiting, intensive case management, and job retention in-house, rather than requesting that GDOL contract it out to an employment service provider. In addition, in Fulton County there are multiple employment service providers that provide different types of placements (e.g., on-site and community). Those clients who are work-ready are assigned to an employment service provider that offers job placement sites at an agency in the community. Those who require more support are referred to an agency that provides structured, on-site, group placements at the employment service provider.

Work placement decisions (types of placements, amount of wages, etc). Work placement decisions are often made on the basis of the needs and capacity of the contracted service providers and the clients they serve. Types of work placements, wages, work placement schedules, and hours of participation are determined by GoodWorks! collaboratives. For example, in Bibb County, clients work from 30 to 40 hours per week in group or community placements and are paid \$5.50 to \$7.40 per hour depending on the work placement. DeKalb County also varies the type of placements but pays a set wage of

¹³ GoodWorks! in Clarke County served eight clients at the time of the site visit.

\$6.50 per hour up to 30 hours per week. Richmond and Clarke counties rely primarily on on-site group placements at the local employment service provider, and wages are typically \$6.00 per hour.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS: RESOURCES, WORK PLACEMENTS, AND PROGRAM STAFFING

GoodWorks! employment service providers are experienced in providing supported employment services. In each of the study sites, employment service providers have established reputations in their communities and have extensive experience with operating supported employment programs for individuals with disabilities. In Clarke and Fulton counties, the agencies have been operating for more than 30 years. Agencies typically have established relationships with employers in which they link individuals to paid placements and/or unsubsidized jobs. All of the providers in the study sites primarily serve Vocational Rehabilitation clients and other individuals with disabilities. They have implemented a service delivery structure and trained staff based on a supported employment model. Furthermore, most employment service providers have facilities to accommodate on-site structured work placements. Agencies may provide other client services, such as training programs, GED classes, and job search resources. Some offer supportive services, including transportation, work clothing, and emergency needs.

Most agencies have very little experience serving welfare recipients. In comparing the populations, agency staff indicate that both GoodWorks! and Vocational Rehabilitation clients have serious disabilities that hinder work. However, Vocational Rehabilitation clients generally are eager to work and try to find ways to adjust to their disabilities, whereas many GoodWorks! clients are resistant to work and, at times, are more uncooperative.

Employment Service Providers Give Clients Work Experience in Supported Settings

Supported employment programs generally use one of two types of placements—on-site structured group placements at their agency (on-site group placements) or placements with local employers (community placements). Two factors appear to influence the types of placements offered in local sites—the capacity of the organization to provide on-site group placements, and the philosophy of the local employment service provider (that is, it may prefer one approach over the other). Table III.3 describes the types of subsidized placements used in the study sites, how placements are assigned, and clients' wages. Most sites use a mix of placements and assign clients based on individual needs and interests. Fulton County is the only site that assigns clients to community or on-site group placements depending on level of job readiness.

On-site group placements. On-site group placements are structured worksites or sheltered workshops that have the capacity to provide jobs for many people at one time. On-site work placements typically are in a warehouse setting, performing such tasks as cashiering, sorting, forklift operating, or piecework. In Clarke County, GoodWorks! participants package toys, stuff invitations into envelopes, and assemble pens. One of the agencies in Richmond County, a large food bank warehouse and food assistance program,

offers an intensive training in culinary job skills while clients are working. Clients in Bibb County sort books or work as cashiers in the agency's retail store. The jobs are typically designed such that workers can come and go without a disruption to the workflow. Agencies that provide on-site group placements generally have the physical facilities and an experienced staff to provide structured work placements.

Table III.3. Description of Subsidized Work Placements

Placement Features	Bibb County	Clarke County	DeKalb County	Fulton County	Richmond County
Type of work placement during work adjustment	On-site group and community	On-site group	On-site group and community	On-site group and community	On-site group
How placements are assigned	Client interest	Group	Client interest	Level of job readiness	Group
Wage during work evaluation	\$5.15	\$5.15	\$5.15	\$5.36	\$5.15
Wage during work adjustment	\$5.50-\$7.40	\$6.00	\$6.50	\$6.40	\$6.00-\$8.52

Community placements. These are entry-level positions, such as customer service, clerical, health care, food service, and janitorial jobs in a mix of for-profit, non-profit, and government agencies. To provide community placements, the employment service provider must have well-developed relationships with employers and staff who are willing to interact regularly with employers and work site supervisors. Employment service providers are responsible for developing the job sites and monitoring clients' participation and progress toward work. Sites that provide community placements mostly rely on existing agency staff to develop work site placements, rather than hiring specialized staff to perform this function.

One of the ongoing discussions among GoodWorks! providers is whether to use on-site group placements or community placements. Both have advantages and drawbacks. The advantages of each include the following.

- **Group placements often provide more structure and support than community placements.** GoodWorks! staff often are co-located in the same facilities as clients participating in their work placements, which improves their ability to assess clients' needs and monitor and track participation. Supervisors are skilled in teaching appropriate workplace behaviors. Clients who need a more structured work environment benefit from on-site group placements. At a few study sites, assigning clients in community placements before they were work-ready began to damage relationships with employers.

- **In on-site group placements, clients may tap into job placement resources more easily than clients at an off-site location.** Employment service providers often have job search resources on site. Clients working at the facility may easily access these services and take time off to interview for jobs. Those in community placements are required to travel to GDOL career centers or other locations. They appeared to have less flexibility leaving work to conduct job search activities and to interview for jobs.
- **Community placements more closely resemble “real world work.”** Clients placed in community settings work in entry-level jobs rather than jobs created specifically for GoodWorks! participants. Clients in community placements indicated they have regular jobs in which co-workers and supervisors treat them as real employees. Some prefer community placements to on-site group placements because of the stigma associated with working in an agency that serves individuals with disabilities.
- **Community placements sometimes lead to permanent jobs.** When clients are in a community placement, they are directly linked with a potential employer, who may use subsidized positions as a way to hire and train entry-level workers. While there is no requirement that community placements lead to permanent employment, they sometimes do so. Working at a community placement helps clients to get a foot in the door at organizations where they may be interested in seeking employment. Clients see this as one of the primary advantages of community placements.

Clients Are Assigned to a Work Placement Based on Their Needs and Interests

GoodWorks! staff uses assessment information and input from clients to determine where to place them. In Bibb, DeKalb, and Richmond counties, clients are assigned to an on-site group placement during work evaluation, which occurs during the first month of the program. They may choose from a narrow selection of work positions associated with operating the employment service provider’s warehouse and store. After the initial work evaluation, clients may continue in an on-site placement at the employment service provider or request a community placement from a range of job sites. Clarke County exclusively uses on-site group placements in a structured work setting. Some agencies providing on-site group placements rely on contracts from organizations to do piecework, such as light assembly, sorting, and packaging. In these agencies, the work varies daily depending on the type of work being conducted by the agency. In other agencies, positions are more specialized, including clerical, cashiering, and fork lift operating. Fulton County assigns work-ready clients to a provider that offers only community placements and refers those who need more support to an on-site group placement.

Wages at Job Placements Are Slightly Higher Than Minimum Wage

Most of the study sites set the same wage for all clients, regardless of their work placement. Clarke County pays clients \$6.00 per hour for most of their placements. In

Fulton and DeKalb counties, clients are paid \$6.40 and \$6.50 per hour, respectively. Two of the study sites, Richmond and Bibb counties, vary the wages—from \$5.50 to \$8.52—depending on the type of placement and agency; wages typically are whatever the employer pays for entry-level positions. An employment service provider in Richmond County offers the highest wage, \$8.52 per hour, but it is a combined work and training placement that lasts only 13 weeks. In Bibb County, clients working as child care workers earn \$5.50 per hour, whereas those in a chicken processing plant earn \$7.40 per hour. Wages may vary for on-site group placements within the same agency. For example, one employment service provider pays \$6.25 per hour for clerical positions, \$6.00 for production, and \$6.30 for sales associates.

Study sites implement a standard and relatively smooth process to pay clients. Employment service providers gather and verify the number of hours clients work during a given pay period and submit it to the local workforce development board. The local workforce board draws money from GDOL and processes paychecks.¹⁴ The employment service provider or the local workforce board distributes paychecks to the clients. This process operates similarly in most of the study sites, with the exception of DeKalb County, where the employment service provider handles the entire process. In all of the study sites, clients are paid bi-monthly.

GoodWorks! Staff Are the “Backbone” of the Program

GoodWorks! staff are actively involved in helping the client prepare for employment. They staff are hired by the employment service provider and usually include a program manager, personal advisors, job coaches, and recruiters (see Table III.4). These individuals are paid with GoodWorks! funds (TANF). Other agencies provide staff who assist with assessments, paying clients, workshop instruction, and job placement. These personnel may work full- or part-time with GoodWorks! clients but also work for agencies that are not direct recipients of GoodWorks! funding. A description of GoodWorks! staff roles follows.

Program manager. Sites typically hire a program manager to carry out day-to-day operations. The program manager is the link between GoodWorks! staff and the local collaborative. He or she coordinates service delivery, supervises program staff, and participates in client case conferences. In some sites, the program manager has responsibilities for other programs.

Personal advisors. Personal advisors are intensive case managers who help clients develop problem-solving and life skills so they may break down barriers to employment and manage their personal lives while working. Personal advisors typically have bachelor’s degrees in a human services-related field and earn between \$28,000 and \$44,000 annually.

¹⁴ TANF funds transferred from the Department of Human Resources are used to pay client wages.

Job coaches. Job coaches teach clients appropriate workplace behavior and how to adjust to a work environment. They also help with workplace adjustments for individuals with disabilities and act as a mediator between the client and employer when there is conflict in the workplace. Job coaches may have either a bachelor’s degree or a high school diploma and work-related experience. They earn slightly less than a personal advisor, but are only required to serve clients during standard work hours.

Table III.4. GoodWorks! Staffing

Providers and Staff Types	Bibb County	Clarke County	DeKalb County	Fulton County	Richmond County
Employment Service Provider(s)	Goodwill Industries of Middle GA and the CSRA	Kelly Diversified, Inc. (KDI)	Goodwill Industries of North GA	Bobby Dodd Industries J. Stinson and Associates WORKTEC	Goodwill Industries of Middle GA and the CSRA Golden Harvest
Number of outreach recruiters ^a	1	n/a	2	2	1
Number of personal advisors managers	11	1	4	15	23
Client-to-staff ratio	25:1	8:1	30:1	15–20:1	15:1
Number of job coaches	6	Provided by PA	5 and 1 supervisor	Varies by employment service provider ^c	11
Client-to-staff ratio	10-15:1		Varies by assignment ^b		25:1
Job placement/development staff	GDOL Goodwill Industries	GDOL KDI	GDOL Goodwill Industries	GDOL Bobby Dodd J. Stinson	GDOL Richmond/Burke Job Training Authority Goodwill Industries

^a Since the site visits were conducted, these outreach recruiter positions have been eliminated by the employment service provider in Bibb, DeKalb, and Richmond counties. These responsibilities are handled by other GoodWorks! staff.

^b Job coaches have three types of responsibilities: 1 job coach for clients in work evaluation (30 to 40 cases), 3 job coaches for clients in work adjustment (10 to 15 cases per worker), and 1 job coach for job retention (35 to 40 cases).

^c Job coaches at Bobby Dodd Industries and WORKTEC typically manage Vocational Rehabilitation and GoodWorks! clients. J. Stinson and Associates hires 10 contracted job coaches to work with clients.

Recruiters.¹⁵ Recruiters inform clients about GoodWorks! and encourage them to participate. They coordinate child care and transportation and follow up with clients who do not attend orientation. Recruiters are described as “the link between getting a program referral and the client actually showing up.” They typically are former welfare recipients who may or may not be former GoodWorks! clients.

Program staff are central to achieving the goals of GoodWorks! There are several features of program staffing that contribute to the uniqueness of the program:

- **Low client-to-staff ratios enhance personal support.** Personal advisors and job coaches manage 15 to 30 cases. A small caseload allows staff to individualize services and to more readily teach clients the skills they need to manage work and their families. The level of involvement of staff in serving clients and the effort required to coordinate services mean that staff work with fewer cases than in traditional employment programs.
- **Staff share responsibility for serving clients.** Staff work as a team while recruiting, making assessments, conducting case conferences, linking clients to services, monitoring participation and progress in work, and working on job placement and retention. Encouraging staff to work together appears to expand the range of staff resources available to clients. In addition, it may improve the quality of service delivery as staff work together to share ideas and resources and to provide each other with professional support.
- **Pooling staff resources from a variety of agencies enhances program capacity.** Staff from partner agencies including GDOL, DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, and the WIA/WtW administrative entities may conduct assessments, teach job readiness classes, assist with job development and placement, and coordinate payment of client wages. The focus of GoodWorks! on using staff from different agencies to administer and provide services results in bringing together professionals with different backgrounds, perspectives, and strengths.
- **Case conferences provide a formal and informal mechanism to help to coordinate service delivery.** These conferences, which reflect the collaborative approach of GoodWorks!, act not only as a system of checks and balances in case planning but also as a forum in which staff can share

¹⁵ Four of the five study sites initially hired outreach recruiters. Clarke County had existing staff handle recruiting activities. Under the new contracts (November 2001), three of the four study sites that hired recruiters eliminated the positions (Bibb, DeKalb, and Richmond counties). Only one site, Fulton County, currently uses an outreach recruiter to conduct home visits. Sites without recruiters rely on other GoodWorks! staff to handle outreach activities.

information about various service options and discuss how to make the best use of employees with different types of expertise. Interagency case conferences are often held with clients to identify and coordinate service needs and to determine whether clients are progressing toward employment. Small caseloads allow time for frequent informal case conferences among GoodWorks! staff and collaborative partners.

PROGRAM FUNDING AND PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

The cost of operating GoodWorks! is higher than traditional employment services because of client wages and staff costs associated with the intensive approach and low client to staff ratios. As a result, it requires a commitment by state administrators to allocate funding to support the program. It also encourages states to be strategic in how they utilize existing resources.

Reinvestment of TANF Funds to Pay Program Costs and Client Wages

Georgia reinvests its TANF savings from declining caseloads to pay for state GDOL GoodWorks! staff, supported employment services at the local level, and client wages and worker' compensation benefits. Initially, state formula and competitive Welfare-to-Work funds were used to pay for some services, but these funds have been spent in most communities. GoodWorks! mandates that localities use existing resources funded by TANF and other sources (e.g., Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser) to provide services whenever they can. In the first year (FY 2000-2001), GDOL received \$18.6 million to operate the GoodWorks! program. The second year, FY 2001-2002, \$12.2 million was allocated for services and another \$4.7 million for client wages and related costs.

Payment Structure and Amount

GoodWorks! employment service providers operate under performance-based contracts in which they are paid a specified amount for each payment benchmark they achieve. In the original GoodWorks! contracts, there were a total of nine payment benchmarks including enrollment, completion of work evaluation, work adjustment, job placement, and job retention, among others (see Table III.5). This performance-based payment arrangement can be challenging, especially for providers serving hard-to-employ populations, because payment is contingent upon clients achieving the benchmarks. Despite this, service providers appeared to be able to meet their program costs. In some cases, foundation funding, agency earnings (profits from the work performed by clients), and other funding sources were used to help cover the cost of providing GoodWorks! services.

At the time of the site visits, providers were in the process of shifting to a new contract with new payment benchmarks that focused more on getting clients employed. For example, instead of a monthly payment for intensive case management, providers are paid monthly for the time the client is in work adjustment for up to nine months. The monthly payment amount decreases every three months to encourage providers to move the client into unsubsidized employment. In addition, the payment for getting clients off TANF was

substantially reduced while the payment for placing a client in unsubsidized employment was increased. The payment for individual job coaching was also reduced to bring the payment for this service more in line with actual costs.

Table III.5. Performance-Based Contract Benchmarks for FY2001 and FY2002

Payment Benchmark	Payment Amount 2001 ^a	Payment Amount 2002 ^a
Enrollment	\$550-\$750	\$400
Work Evaluation	\$550-\$750	\$700-\$900
Off TANF	\$750-\$1,000	\$250
Core Case Management	\$300-\$500 per person per quarter	
Intensive Case Management	\$350-\$650 per person per month	
Phase I-Work Adjustment		\$350-\$550 per month ^b
Phase II-Work Adjustment		\$250-\$450 per month ^b
Phase III-Work Adjustment		\$200-\$300 per month ^b
Individual Job Coaching ¹⁶	\$2,000-\$2,750	\$800-\$1,000
Unsubsidized Placement	\$500-\$750	\$900-\$1,150
Job Retention	\$500-\$750 per person per quarter	\$700-\$1,050 per person per quarter
Maximum Payment Per Client	\$10,400-\$16,350	\$8,250-\$11,800

^aPayment amount indicates a one-time payment amount per participant unless specified otherwise.

^bPayment is for a maximum of three months

Under the current contract terms, the maximum payment an employment services provider can receive for a client who participates in the program and finds employment ranges from \$8,250-\$11,800. (The range reflects differences in the costs of providing services in various communities across the state.) The state GDOL estimates that the total direct program cost (including wages) per person per month is about \$785.

¹⁶ The job coaching benchmark is a minimum of 30 days with five elements of activity (e.g., job interviewing skills, job preparation, job readiness, job orientation, and job performance evaluation.)

CHAPTER IV

PROGRAM OUTCOMES AND CLIENTS' EXPERIENCES

Programs targeting hard-to-employ welfare recipients have received increasing attention from researchers and policymakers alike since the implementation of PRWORA. Researchers have documented “promising practices” and program models for serving hard-to-employ populations (Pavetti and Strong 2001; Brown 2001; Johnson and Meckstroth 1998; Pavetti et al. 1996). Still, little is known about what types of strategies may be effective for helping hard-to-employ TANF recipients get and keep jobs. In this chapter, we use administrative data and information gathered from focus groups with current and former GoodWorks! participants in each of the study sites to describe patterns of employment and program outcomes as well as clients’ overall experience with GoodWorks!. While these findings do not speak to the overall effectiveness of GoodWorks!, they do indicate that many TANF recipients with long histories of welfare receipt and multiple barriers to employment can and do work. GoodWorks! participants indicated that the support provided by the program helps them to gain a foothold in the labor market and build a foundation for future advancement.

- **Many GoodWorks! participants, especially those who complete the program, find unsubsidized jobs. However, there is considerable variation across the study sites.**

Job placement rates for all program participants in the study sites range from 35 to 70 percent (see Table IV.1). The placement rate is highest in Richmond County, which has the most experience operating GoodWorks!. It is lowest in Fulton County, which serves a more urban population and has a more complex administrative structure as well as fewer participants completing the program. It is important to note that these placement rates reflect only employment that was known to the agency. Therefore, the employment rate for GoodWorks! participants is likely to be higher than these numbers suggest. However, although no GoodWorks! participants were working when they started the program, it is likely that some would have found employment on their own, so these numbers cannot be used to gauge how effective GoodWorks! is at increasing employment among long-term welfare recipients. Still, the placement rates are within the range of, and some are higher than, job placement rates in most welfare employment programs.

GoodWorks! job placement rates are substantially higher for those who complete the program, ranging from 54 percent in Bibb County to 85 percent in Richmond County. The finding that steady program participation usually leads to permanent unsubsidized employment is consistent with other studies of transitional employment programs like GoodWorks! (Kirby et al. 2002). State and local GoodWorks! administrators emphasize the importance of encouraging initial and ongoing participation. Although there are no data on the success of recruiting efforts in increasing initial program participation, administrative data shows that, in most sites, once clients attend orientation, they generally complete the program by finishing nine months of their work placement or by finding an unsubsidized job. Program completion rates in the study sites range from 43 to 86 percent (see Table IV.1). The highest completion rate is in Bibb County, and the lowest is in Fulton County.

Most clients work about 36 hours a week in clerical, health care, or service positions. The median wage for clients ranges from \$5.75 to \$8.00 per hour. Richmond County, which has the highest rate of job placement, also has the lowest median hourly wage. This could reflect the local labor market. Alternatively, the site's high completion and placement rates may indicate that it is placing more participants who face greater barriers to employment and cannot command as high a wage as others who may be somewhat easier to place.

Table IV.1. Employment Outcomes For GoodWorks! Participants¹⁷

Employment Outcomes	Bibb (n=223)	DeKalb (n=167)	Fulton (n=281)	Richmond (n=456)
Job Placement Rates for All Clients	47.2	45.5	35.2	69.7
Percentage of Program Completions ¹⁸	86.8	64.2	42.7	82.0
Placement Rates for Program Completers	54.4	70.1	82.5	85.1
Median Hourly Wage	\$6.00	\$8.00	\$6.50	\$5.75
Median Hours/ Week	36	36	36	35

Source: State administrative data.

¹⁷ Clarke County was eliminated from the administrative data analysis because of the small sample size.

¹⁸ Clients complete the program by participating at least nine months in their work placement or by obtaining unsubsidized employment before the end of their placement period.

- **In order to work, GoodWorks! participants must overcome substantial personal and family challenges. They indicate that work supports are essential to their success.**

GoodWorks! clients face personal and family challenges that interfere with work. Using state administrative data based on reports from GoodWorks! staff, we found that at the time of program enrollment, nearly two-thirds of GoodWorks! participants statewide (65.4 percent) had no source of transportation, and about half the participants (49.6 percent) lacked child care (see Table IV.2). The situation was the most extreme in DeKalb County, where 74.6 percent lacked child care and 79.4 percent lacked transportation at enrollment. Limited education is also extremely common among GoodWorks! participants. Statewide, only 36.0 percent of GoodWorks! participants have at least 12 years of education. In Richmond County, this figure is even lower at 26.9 percent.

Table IV.2. Percentage of Clients with Logistical Barriers to Employment

	Statewide	Bibb County	DeKalb County	Fulton County	Richmond County
Less than 12 years education	64.0	49.0	56.3	50.7	73.1
Lack transportation	65.2	65.6	79.4	61.1	65.3
Presence of preschool child	50.3	54.5	51.5	46.2	47.1
Lack childcare at enrollment	49.6	42.0	74.6	58.8	47.6

Source: State and site administrative data

Note: Clarke County was excluded from the analysis due to the relatively small sample size.

To a large extent, the focus group findings mirror the findings from administrative data. Current and former program participants described the circumstances that make it difficult for them to work. Difficulty finding child care, lack of transportation, and housing issues were commonly mentioned. Clients frequently said that lack of a GED or high school diploma made it difficult for them to find jobs and advance once they had them.

Focus group participants emphasized the importance of work supports and resources (e.g., transportation, housing assistance, work clothing, utilities assistance, eyeglasses, and dental services) in helping them get and keep a job. One GoodWorks! participant described how her personal advisor drove her to and from work daily until she could arrange for transportation. In describing the resources, one client said, “It [GoodWorks!] gives you things to help your situation.”

- **Participants believe the personal support they receive contributes to their success. However, participants said that they do not all receive the same level of support, which may be attributed to differences in the skill and approach of program staff.**

Although various GoodWorks! and partner staff are involved in service delivery, personal advisors are the clients' primary contact. They help clients deal with a range of challenges from the most minor to the most complex. In addition to helping clients access resources, GoodWorks! staff provide personal support. Clients cited such personal and family challenges as limited motivation, fear of being independent, mental health issues, domestic abuse, criminal histories, and children with physical and behavioral problems. In addition, clients typically have limited support networks and are reluctant to trust. The process of overcoming this reluctance is reflected especially in the words of one client: "I was holding in so much stuff. They [GoodWorks! staff] helped bring stuff inside of you out. I learned that other people are going through hard things. That other people's story is worse than ours." Another said, "They teach us to deal with stuff we've never had to deal with before." Still another talked about how her personal advisor "brought her to a place of comfort." At first, this client was afraid to tell her personal advisor about her drug addiction and criminal history. While she was in GoodWorks!, she served jail time for fines that had accumulated before she enrolled in the program. Her personal advisor visited her in jail, helped her find housing when she was released, and referred her to substance abuse treatment. "If I don't understand, they explain things to me," said one client. Another described how her personal advisor helped her access mental health counseling.

Relationships between personal advisors and clients develop through regular and frequent interaction as they deal with barriers to employment. Some clients talk with their personal advisor daily, others less frequently. All of the current program participants in the focus groups indicated that they talked with their personal advisor at least weekly and former participants, at least monthly. The frequency of the contact in some cases increases the extent to which clients trust their personal advisor. One single mother with five children said that she was initially reluctant to open up to her personal advisor and ask for help. While in GoodWorks!, the client's mother unexpectedly died, and gradually, she began confiding in her personal advisor. Other clients talked about how it was helpful knowing that they could call their personal advisor at any time. A client who talks with her personal advisor daily (except Saturdays and Sundays) noted the level of support she feels from her personal advisor: "If I need someone, she is there." Another said, "My PA (personal advisor) is my friend. She understands me. She supports me."

This level of support, however, does not appear to be consistent across clients. One focus group participant said, "At the beginning I would hear things about the program and would ask my PA. They wouldn't help me." Others expressed frustration because their personal advisor treated them "like children," made promises they did not keep, or did not provide enough information about the program. Some clients attributed this variation to differences in personal needs and resources. For example, one client said that she did not rely as much on her personal advisor because her mother was available to help. Still, it appears that some clients who said they needed support were not getting it. In some cases,

clients found GoodWorks! or partner agency staff other than their personal advisors to help them. For one client, the job coach played this role. The client explained, “I love my job coach. She’s there for me.”

- **Work placements give clients who have not been successful at finding employment an opportunity to work.**

Some clients indicated that what makes GoodWorks! different is that it has given them an opportunity to work. Some TANF recipients with criminal histories said that before GoodWorks!, they had difficulty finding jobs even if they had worked in the past. For example, one former TANF recipient had a steady work history and served seven years in the military. But because she was convicted of a felony, she had difficulty getting a job. She indicated that having a work placement “gave her a second chance.” The work placement eventually led to a permanent job. In describing her experience, she concluded, “The program was a blessing. I couldn’t get a job anywhere.” Other clients with criminal histories described similar experiences. They needed the work placement in order to re-enter the labor market. Alternatively, GoodWorks! clients with limited work histories used the work placement to develop confidence in their ability to work. One client noted, “It gives you a chance to go over your barriers.” Another said, “It’s an open door, an opportunity.”

When clients were ready to work, they had help finding an unsubsidized job from job coaches, personal advisors, job placement staff, and work site supervisors. GoodWorks! and other agency staff share job leads with clients, assist with job search activities, and generally encourage clients in their searches.

- **Clients’ assessment of the quality of their work placement experience depends on the amount of supervision they receive, the types of tasks assigned to them, and whether they are treated like permanent agency staff.**

Several factors appear to have influenced a client’s work placement experience. Specifically, the amount of supervision they received, the types of tasks assigned to them, and how they were treated compared to permanent employees seem, in most cases, to have greater influence on the placement experience than the type of placement itself.

A client completing her work placement at the local water authority said that what she liked most is that her supervisor teaches her new skills and exposes her to different tasks. Another talked about how her co-workers included her in staff meetings, office parties, and in day-to-day work activities. During some focus groups, clients expressed frustration about being treated negatively by other co-workers at their work placement. One client reported that her co-workers “looked down on her” and that her supervisor treated her like a child. Others were bored or unchallenged in their work placement. Clients in on-site group placements reacted differently to working alongside vocational rehabilitation clients with severe disabilities. Some said it made them feel uncomfortable and that there was something “wrong” with them because they were grouped among severely disabled individuals. Others, less concerned with stigma, said that working alongside vocational rehabilitation clients inspired them to work harder.

Clients enter GoodWorks! with the expectation that the program will be more supportive and provide more opportunities than traditional employment programs. Clients said that, in “selling” the program, staff sometimes make “false promises” about the level and types of support. Without elaborating, one woman, said that there were “a lot of surprises.” In addition, some clients thought that they would be hired by their work placement and became frustrated when they weren’t. Clients frequently described GoodWorks! as better than most programs that they had participated in but that it wasn’t always exactly what they expected.

- **GoodWorks! participants indicate that working makes them feel better about themselves and allows them to be a positive role model for their children.**

Higher self-esteem, a better attitude toward work, and a sense of personal satisfaction and pride are some of the benefits of work that clients mentioned. A former client said, “I look forward to going to work everyday. I love my job.” When asked what they liked about working, clients cited interacting with people, the work environment, learning new skills, being independent, and being able to make purchases with income from paid work. A former GoodWorks! participant, now working in an unsubsidized job, described how she went from living with her mother to purchasing a home of her own. “I like being able to buy things,” said another client. One participant said that before enrolling in GoodWorks!, she was irritable from the stress of unemployment. Her children avoided her. Once she began to work as a result of the program, however, her children became excited about and proud of their mother’s accomplishment.

- **GoodWorks! participants believe the program helps them to develop confidence in themselves and hope for the future.**

Clients believe the support they receive from personal advisors and other program staff has helped them change their behavior and their attitudes. According to one client, “I was bitter. Now it’s all positive.” Another said, “When I came, I had low self-esteem. Now I know I’m worth something.” Still another concluded, “GoodWorks! taught me that I can do anything that I want to do.”

A number of current and former program participants said that their self-esteem and sense of self-worth increased. They talked about feeling stronger, more responsible, and able to change the way they act, dress, and carry themselves. In reflecting on her personal transformation, one participant said, “I had a nasty attitude,” but she said that her attitude eventually improved.

It also appears that change occurs over time with consistent support. Clients said that they are continually motivated by GoodWorks! staff, who talk with them about how they and their children deserve better. “I want to accomplish and achieve and not fall down. They (GoodWorks! staff) haven’t given up on me, so I won’t give up on myself.” “They tell people to go forward,” said another.

During focus groups, GoodWorks! clients talked about their future career goals and aspirations. Current clients talked about how they wanted to be hired by their work

placement. Former clients who are unhappy with their current job said that they would stay in the job until they found another. Clients also talked about wanting more education or training. One client working in the health care industry spoke about her desire to complete her nursing degree. Another is interested in interior decorating. Still another wants to finish a college degree and become a teacher.

- **Clients see GoodWorks! as different from and better able to address their needs than other programs in which they have participated.**

Clients were generally positive about the program and acknowledged that it was a better experience than other work programs they have participated in. In their minds, GoodWorks! differs from other programs in that it provides work experience, paid employment, training, and additional opportunities and resources. Clients also said that the support they feel from other program participants motivated them. In addition, they talked about how GoodWorks! personal advisors and staff helped them overcome their fear of working and other barriers to employment. One former participant indicated that GoodWorks! changed her life. Before enrolling in GoodWorks!, she was taking prescribed medications for depression. Having completed the program, she no longer experiences depressive episodes.

Even though clients were generally positive about the program, they had suggestions for improving it. They recommended the following: providing additional work placement sites, offering training programs and GED classes, providing more information about services, increasing the types and amount of work preparation activities, and creating mentoring programs for working participants.

- **Clients concluded that, in the end, their success depends on them.**

Reflecting on their experience, clients believe GoodWorks! works for those who want to succeed. In offering advice to others, clients talked about “not giving up” and “being accountable.” One client concluded, “You have to make a difference for yourself.” Another said, “[We] need to help ourselves too. [We] need to push ourselves forward.” Former clients in particular emphasize the importance of taking responsibility for oneself in order to succeed.

Belinda Ficklin: A Personal Account of GoodWorks!

Belinda Ficklin, a 32-year-old single mother of four children, successfully completed the GoodWorks! program by obtaining a full-time job. Belinda overcame serious challenges in order to work. Sadly, Belinda was killed in a car accident in July 2002. Shortly before she died, she wrote a note to GoodWorks! staff describing her experience with the program. Her story is particularly poignant.

After serving seven years in the military, Belinda's transition to civilian life was rocky. Within several years, she was convicted of two felonies, each carrying a jail sentence. She explained, "After the last sentence of 60-120 days at the detention center, I finally realized that I had ruined enough of my life and my children's lives, so I did a complete turnaround in my life. I started making plans for the future. This is where all of my struggles began; no one would touch me with a 10-foot pole because of the fact that I am a convicted felon. A lot of the companies I applied with turned me down before they even met me. All of this had a very traumatic effect on me both mentally and physically."

She continued, "I felt that all of my options had been used. And then I got a phone call from a recruiter from the GoodWorks! program asking if she could come by my house to tell me about the program. I figured I had nothing to lose and invited her to come right over. She explained the benefits to me and allowed me to make the choice. I told her that I was a convicted felon and she stated that it didn't matter the program would still accept me. I enrolled for orientation that following week and started classes the last week of April in 2001."

After orientation, Belinda began her work placement sorting, tagging, and hanging clothing. She said, "I had gained my self worth back! A lot of people would see this type of work as nothing but when you are starting over again, it's more than you could hope for." In addition to working in the warehouse, she participated in job readiness workshops. One day, the workshop instructor approached her and said, "My supervisor came to me this morning, they need some help at the corporate office, she wants my best student and I thought of you!" In describing this experience, Belinda said, "I just stood there with my mouth open looking at her. I was in a state of shock. This woman who just met me about a week ago would think this much of me and to give me an opportunity to prove myself . . . I spoke with my personal advisor, and we decided to go for it. He not only encouraged me at this phase in the program but through all of the trying times I had."

Belinda began her work placement as a clerical assistant. After a month, her worksite supervisor encouraged her to apply for a receptionist position that became available within the agency. Belinda's went on to say, "I jumped at the chance. I saw this as a way to upgrade myself in the eyes of my children and all the people who said I would never make a change in my life." In June 2001, she became a full-time employee. Reflecting on her experience with GoodWorks!, Belinda said, "My journey to the position that I now hold has not been one without many obstacles. For there were many times in my life that I wanted to give up. . . . So for those of you who are thinking of joining the GoodWorks! programs, please do it! I can only tell you that it was the answer to all of my prayers and the salve on a wound that I created in my life. Goodwill is a place to earn your self-respect and the respect and friendships of many others. Thank you for giving me my life back!"

CHAPTER V

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES, AND LESSONS LEARNED

GoodWorks! reflects the efforts of state and local administrators to provide employment services for families who are nearing or who have already reached the time limit on benefits. This study provides insight into a potential “promising practice” for other state and local welfare administrators to learn from. Replicating the entire program model may not be necessary; instead, program administrators may choose to implement different program components to improve existing employment services. Here we conclude with a discussion of key program accomplishments, the challenges raised by program implementation, and the lessons learned from the GoodWorks! experience.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Like nearly every other state, Georgia must respond to the diversity of its population and local service delivery structure when designing new and innovative programs. GoodWorks! provides a framework, but allows local sites to tailor the program to meet their needs. Consequently, the sites have faced different challenges and achieved a broad range of accomplishments. As the sites become more experienced, the program will continue to evolve. Yet even in its early stages, GoodWorks! has become an important source of support for hard-to-employ welfare recipients. Overall, we found several key program accomplishments.

- **GoodWorks! stops the benefits clock for families who are nearing the time limit and provides a “safety net” for those who already have reached the end of their time limit.**

As the welfare time limit draws near for many TANF families, GoodWorks! provides an alternative form of support that still advances the original goals of welfare reform: personal responsibility and work. For those who have not reached the time limit, bi-monthly paychecks for those participating in subsidized employment allows individuals to “bank” their remaining months on cash assistance. For those whose benefits have expired, the program acts as a safety net.

- **GoodWorks! supports long-term, hard-to-employ welfare recipients who were not participating in any work activities in their efforts to move from welfare to work.**

Many hard-to-employ welfare recipients who were not originally participating in work activities or working become employed after participating in the GoodWorks! program. While some of this employment may have occurred without GoodWorks!, it seems likely that GoodWorks! encourages some clients to find employment sooner than they might have on their own and helps some who may have never found work on their own do so. GoodWorks! targets long-term welfare recipients who have had difficulty getting jobs. Researchers have documented that those with the same characteristics as GoodWorks! clients, that is, low education and basic skills, limited work experience, multiple barriers, and long-term welfare receipt are less likely to become employed (Danziger et al. 1999; Martinson 2000; Olson and Pavetti 1996) than those not facing these challenges. And yet, for those enrolled in GoodWorks!, about half find jobs. Placement rates are as high as 70 percent. According to program staff, participants are also more prepared to work than they once were as a result of GoodWorks! resources, work opportunities, and the individualized support they receive from GoodWorks! staff.

- **Local agencies have been successful at coordinating existing resources to address the needs of clients.**

By coordinating their resources, agencies have been able to expand the services available to hard-to-employ welfare recipients. Some sites are more effective with collaborating and coordinating services than others. However, based on our observations, most of the study sites were working toward improving the collaboration and coordination of services for GoodWorks! participants. We found that, monthly GoodWorks! collaborative meetings and interagency case conferences are the mechanisms that link staff from different agencies. Because staff share ideas and plan service delivery together, they develop a greater awareness of one another's roles, objectives, and techniques. Through this fabric of coordination and understanding, clients can receive services from different agencies in a more seamless way.

- **GoodWorks! provides employers with entry-level workers who are screened, trained, and supported.**

Employers are very important players in the GoodWorks! model. Program designers and staff have done much to cultivate and sustain this commitment for the benefit of all GoodWorks! stakeholders. Clients are drug screened and subject to a complete background check. The transitional placement provides participants with an opportunity to learn appropriate workplace behaviors and employers with an opportunity to observe their performance. Employers also indicated that their role is made easier by the presence of a job coach or personal advisor they can call if there are difficulties with a GoodWorks! employee regardless of whether the job is a paid subsidized placement or permanent unsubsidized employment.

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- **GoodWorks! participants feel they benefit from the services GoodWorks! provides and from working.**

In focus groups, former program participants provided positive feedback about GoodWorks! *and* their job experiences. Specifically, clients talked about how GoodWorks! personal advisors and staff helped them overcome their fear of working and other barriers to employment. They also talked about the personal growth that ensued from working. They have also seen a renewed sense of pride in their children since they have been working.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES AND “LESSONS LEARNED”

Program challenges often become “lessons learned.” As agency partners and program staff wrestle with GoodWorks! design and implementation challenges, they often develop new approaches to service delivery. This section describes some of the program challenges and “lessons learned” that were identified by state and local GoodWorks! administrators, and by local service providers.

Program Challenge: Effectively Sharing Agency Resources and Coordinating Service Delivery

The collaborative approach to program administration and service delivery is both a key strength and an ongoing challenge for GoodWorks! administrators and staff. Despite the benefits of information sharing and coordinated agency policies, it is difficult to overcome the turf issues and to create the program “buy in” on which collaboration depends. In describing the initial start-up in one county, a local agency administrator said that it took time for all agencies to understand their roles and fully commit to GoodWorks!. In another county, where agencies had little experience working together, GoodWorks! program administrators concluded that operating in a collaborative environment is a new and, at times, difficult concept to grasp, let alone implement. Regardless of a site’s collaborative experience, each indicated that it continues to be a challenge.

Lessons Learned

“Communicate, communicate, communicate” was the advice given by one local agency administrator to others interested in implementing a similar program. The importance of frequent and consistent communication was commonly noted in the study sites. GoodWorks! staff and agency partners recommended e-mail, telephone calls, memoranda, and other forms of communication to keep partners informed. Program administrators also viewed meetings among themselves as an effective way to solve problems. Regular meetings of GoodWorks! staff and case conferences have also been used to keep workers informed about the policy changes affecting and the services available to program participants.

Create “win-win” relationships between agencies. Program administrators talked about the importance of creating constructive relationships between agencies. For example, after the Division of Substance Abuse established services to treat TANF recipients but

received no referrals, it joined forces with GoodWorks!. Drug screening during GoodWorks! orientation helps to identify affected recipients and refer them to substance abuse agencies for treatment. In Bibb County, the GoodWorks! collaborative recently invited the Department of Technical and Adult Education to join the collaborative. The goal here is to provide GED classes for GoodWorks! participants on site at the local employment service provider where some clients complete their work placement.

Create common goals in the interest of GoodWorks! clients. GoodWorks! shared approach to program administration requires agency partners to develop a common vision with regard to serving clients. Agency partners in several of the study sites talked about developing a trusting relationship with clients as one key goal in this vision.

Hold frequent case conferences. GoodWorks! employment service providers are required to hold case conferences throughout service delivery. Personal advisors may also arrange a case conference to resolve a lapse in communication between agency staff and the client or to identify community resources for a specific service need. In visiting the sites, we found that interagency case conferences and internal case conferences with GoodWorks! staff improves service coordination in most situations.

Hire specialized staff to coordinate between agencies. DeKalb County DFCS designates a staff member (community resource specialist) to coordinate all aspects of service delivery between GoodWorks! and DFCS. This worker informs DFCS case managers about GoodWorks!, manages program referrals, attends case conferences, monitors and tracks client participation, and improves timely access to supportive services.

Program Challenge: Encouraging Client Participation

Clients must “show up” if they are to be served. The structured approach to GoodWorks! requires daily participation in work-site activities and regular participation in other activities. As in other employment programs, encouraging client participation is an ongoing challenge in GoodWorks!. In general, the program achieved remarkable success in its overall rates of program completion, however, encouraging clients to show up every day for work can be tough, especially during the first few months of their subsidized work placement as they adjust to working.

Lessons Learned

Identify clients who are appropriate for the program. Including individuals in GoodWorks! with severe barriers may have adverse affects including limited program participation. Sites took several steps to determine the appropriateness of referrals, such as establishing guidelines for referrals, screening for drugs, and conducting pre-enrollment case conferences.

Conduct aggressive outreach. Outreach activities encourage clients to participate in the program. Outreach recruiters or other program staff visit clients at home to tell them about GoodWorks! and to urge them to participate. Outreach recruiters, who are typically

former TANF recipients or GoodWorks! participants, enthusiastically describe both the program and the benefits of working. They may also be helpful in identifying those not willing or able to participate.

Hold clients accountable. Some of the personal advisors we met with said that a “tough love” approach encourages ongoing participation. That is, the advisors hold clients accountable for their actions while offering support and encouragement. According to current and former GoodWorks! participants, this approach, and the support in particular, often motivated them to participate in program activities. In most of the study sites, work attendance is monitored daily, and there are consequences for those who do not show up for work. Additionally, GoodWorks! staff talk with work-site supervisors at least once a week to discuss client performance.

Program Challenge: Working with Those Who Have Severe Personal and Family Challenges

To move into work, some clients require more effort than others from GoodWorks! staff. Clients with severe barriers to employment (e.g., domestic violence, mental health conditions, limited functioning, children who are acting out) often require a more structured, intensive approach than those facing logistical obstacles. Even though personal advisors carry a reduced caseload, serving even a few clients with severe barriers may involve a hefty investment with little return. Personal advisors talked about the personal and professional drain associated with serving clients who have “one crisis after another.” In addition, despite the availability of specialized services, clients are sometimes reluctant to participate in treatment.

Lessons Learned

Acknowledge that the GoodWorks! program is not for everyone. GoodWorks! is a work program. Based on comments from program administrators and staff, it appears to be most effective for individuals who have little work experience and personal or family barriers to employment that interfere with work but do not preclude clients from working. The enhanced supports offered through GoodWorks! may help some hard-to-employ welfare recipients become employed, but those with severe and persistent barriers to employment may require more intensive services before they begin working. Not all hard-to-employ welfare recipients may respond to the GoodWorks! model.

Identify barriers to employment early and aggressively. Identifying barriers to employment early in service delivery allows program staff to address the problems before they interfere with work. Using multiple techniques for identifying barriers also appears to be helpful. In addition to screenings and assessments, GoodWorks! staff, work-site supervisors, and employers may also assist with identifying employment barriers.

Seek input from GoodWorks! staff and other agency partners. The collaborative approach to service delivery allows for varying perspectives in identifying client needs and resources to address them. As previously mentioned, case conferences may be valuable

activities for problem-solving around difficult cases. Agency staff with different professional training, particularly those skilled in working with individuals with disabilities, may have new insights for serving the client.

Show enthusiasm about the small steps clients take toward work. Clients vary considerably in their readiness for work, some moving more slowly than others toward this goal. According to GoodWorks! staff, highlighting the small successes for those with more significant barriers can enhance their progress toward work. In addition, GoodWorks! staff talked about the importance of setting realistic expectations for clients.

Avoid staff burnout. Personal advisors and job coaches stressed the importance of attending to their personal lives to avoid burnout in the face of difficult work. Taking personal time, processing difficult cases with co-workers, and talking to supervisors are some of the ways GoodWorks! staff deal with work-related stress.

Program Challenge: Finding Permanent Jobs for Clients

Clients sometimes fall through the cracks in the transition from subsidized to unsubsidized employment. Cementing the process with a permanent job that is suitable for a client has been a difficult task for most of the sites. Instead of hiring specialized staff to handle job placement, sites generally use a piecemeal approach that may overlook client needs. In addition, in some sites, especially those using community placements, job placement services are offered at a location that is different from the client's subsidized work site, which means that clients must make an additional effort to participate in job search activities.

Lessons Learned

Provide job search services that are easily accessible to clients. Sites that have a more structured and coordinated approach to job placement appear to have less difficulty placing clients in jobs. In addition, contracting with employment service providers who have internal employment resources can also be helpful for clients. For example, DeKalb County operates "Work Connections," an on-site Goodwill Industries employment resource room with an assortment of job search tools for job seekers.

Recruit employers for subsidized work placements who are willing to hire program participants. Some sites that provide community placements target mostly employers who are willing to hire successful program participants. Job developers and placement staff may also identify employers who are seeking additional employees and recruit them to be work placement sites, a method used by J. Stinson & Associates, Inc. in Fulton County. Clients placed in jobs that might become permanent may be motivated to perform well. But the fact that the permanent job is not a sure thing can give clients false hope.

Begin job placement early. In DeKalb and Fulton counties, clients participate in job search activities beginning at work adjustment. DeKalb County holds weekly job club, and

Fulton County requires clients to spend one day a week at the GDOL career center. Early emphasis on job placement reminds clients that the goal is unsubsidized work. It is particularly important for clients to remember this so that they do not become too comfortable in their work placement and develop unrealistic expectations about being hired.

Encourage timely entry into unsubsidized jobs, allowing additional time for those with more barriers. Determining when clients are ready for work is an acquired skill. Encouraging clients to move into permanent work too soon may lead to job loss. Some clients who stay too long in GoodWorks! are fearful of moving into a regular job. GoodWorks! staff indicated that they look at attendance, punctuality, and consistency in job performance to determine when clients are ready for unsubsidized employment.

Program Challenge: Balancing the Needs of Employers with the Needs of Clients

In GoodWorks!, employers get free labor for six to nine months in return for providing subsidized job placements to clients who have limited experience, skill deficits, and serious obstacles to employment. GoodWorks! staff talk frequently with work-site supervisors and clients to monitor both the quality of the work placement and the progress of the client toward unsubsidized work. In some situations, this process works well; in others, the process could be improved. The challenges for GoodWorks! staff are to quickly identify and address problems that interfere with work and to ensure that both clients and employers benefit from the arrangement.

Lessons Learned

Educate employers about the program goals and structure. In DeKalb County, a site that provides community placements, employers providing work placements are given a packet of information that explains the role of personal advisors and job coaches and that contains attendance contracts and the work-site agreement. In conversations with employers, GoodWorks! staff stress that the purpose of the placement is to teach clients job skills and develop healthy workplace behaviors. GoodWorks! staff will reassign the client to a different work placement if it appears that individualized supervision, support, or training are not forthcoming from the employer.

Provide resources and supports to employers and clients. Help with addressing barriers to employment, additional job training, and mediation between employers and clients when difficulties arise are some of the supports that are provided. GoodWorks! staff may also assist with workplace accommodations. Some staff describe GoodWorks! as operating like an Employee Assistance Plan for employers.

Prepare clients for work before placing them in an unsubsidized job. Employers want clients who are ready and willing to work. Toward this end, GoodWorks! staff have learned to better prepare clients for work by providing work supports, developing contingency plans, and teaching healthy workplace behaviors. In addition, some of the study sites offer job readiness workshops and life skills training.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- **Administering a program like GoodWorks! and providing the kinds of services it offers means thinking “outside the box.”**

States and localities interested in designing programs like GoodWorks! need to think differently about providing employment services and serving the hard-to-employ. The GoodWorks! experience teaches us that these programs require creativity, flexibility, and commitment at the state and local levels. Given the challenging nature of the target population, program administrators and staff may need to take a more flexible and individualized approach to service delivery.

- **GoodWorks! demonstrates that clients with complex needs can work if they have the right amount and types of supports.**

Those referred to GoodWorks! are long-term welfare recipients not participating in work or training activities. If they were able to find jobs on their own, it is likely that they would have already done so. The GoodWorks! model integrates work with enhanced supports, an approach that has helped to employ many of these hard-to-employ individuals. Indeed, most GoodWorks! completers find jobs.

- **GoodWorks! provides a “second chance” for those who have reached the time limit.**

As the reality of the federal welfare time limit sets in, policymakers and program administrators are struggling to handle the consequences of PRWORA. Repealing the time limits would undermine the credibility of welfare staff who have used them to encourage clients to work, while enforcing them may have detrimental effects on families. To resolve the dilemma, states and localities may consider developing programs like GoodWorks! in which clients nearing or at the time limit are given an alternative means of support but are still held accountable for supporting their families.

- **GoodWorks! represents the first step in linking clients to the labor market, but clients may require a different set of services to achieve their long-term employment goals.**

GoodWorks! is a springboard for hard-to-employ individuals, linking them to entry-level jobs where they can obtain work experience. However, many individuals may need more education and training in order to advance to better paying jobs. Researchers have documented that access to better jobs for those moving from welfare to work requires additional education and training (Strawn and Martinson 2000; Trutko, Nightingale, and Barnow 1999). Program designers and administrators might consider giving more thought to services that improve clients’ long-term employment prospects. For example, GoodWorks! staff may use the job retention period to develop long-term employment goals and a plan for reaching them. Otherwise, clients may cycle in and out of jobs and/or remain among the working poor.

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- **This study began to build an understanding of the GoodWorks! program, but more research is needed to fully understand how it works and how well it works.**

This study points to several key areas for future research. First, more research is needed on the long-term effects of GoodWorks! on program participants such as job retention, the amount of cycling in and out of jobs, and job advancement. Currently, we have information about the rate of job placement; however, we do not have enough information to determine if clients keep their jobs and what happens if they do not. Second, evaluation using a rigorous experimental design is needed to effectively measure the programs benefits and costs. One of the limitations of this study is that we do not know in the absence of the program if GoodWorks! clients would have found jobs on their own or whether the benefits of the program outweighs the costs. A more rigorous evaluation would make it possible to determine whether and how much participants' employment and earnings increase because of the program. A more rigorous evaluation could also be used determine which of the primary program components (the paid work placements, the enhanced supports, or the combination of the two) have the most effect on program outcomes. Third, further evaluation may focus on the sustainability of GoodWorks! over time, particularly as state resources become tight.

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APPENDIX A
PROGRAM SUMMARIES

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APPENDIX A-1: BIBB COUNTY

Date of Site Visit: March 18-20, 2002

Program Implementation Date: December 2000

Number of Clients: 134 (current), 223 (total)

Agencies Involved in the Local Collaborative: Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS), Vocational Rehabilitation, Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia and the CSRA (Central Savannah River Area), Macon-Bibb County Office of Workforce Development, Macon Housing Authority, and the Department of Technical and Adult Education

Contracted Employment Service Provider(s): Goodwill Industries of the CSRA.

Program Staffing: The core GoodWorks! staff in Bibb County includes a program manager, 11 personal advisors, 6 job coaches, and one recruiter, all of whom are employees of Goodwill Industries. Other staff from partner agencies involved with GoodWorks! include 2 job developers (GDOL and Goodwill Industries) and assessment staff (Vocational Rehabilitation).

Identifying GoodWorks! Participants: Clients are identified as appropriate for GoodWorks! either by their DFCS case manager or during a DFCS case conference targeted to clients who are not progressing in work activities (especially sanctioned clients and those approaching the welfare time limit). In Bibb County, all referrals to GoodWorks! are reviewed during an interagency pre-enrollment case conference to determine if the client is appropriate for the program.

Outreach: When GoodWorks! was first implemented, two recruiters were hired to conduct outreach activities, which took the form of home visits. During these visits, the recruiters would typically be accompanied by personal advisors. Personal advisors now handle all outreach responsibilities.

Program Orientation: GoodWorks! orientation lasts three days. Clients spend the first half of the first day in a classroom session on the GoodWorks! program. For the remainder of the day and the rest of the orientation, clients work at Goodwill Industries and are assessed by agency staff.

Work Placements

Types of Placements: All clients begin their work placements in a group setting on site at Goodwill Industries. During the work adjustment period, clients may be reassigned to a community placement or stay at Goodwill Industries. Community placements are in such areas as customer service, clerical work, child care, and food

service, among others. Placements at Goodwill Industries are typically cashiering, sorting, material handling/warehousing, and receptionist/clerical positions.

Employer of Record: Macon/Bibb County Office of Workforce Development

Wages: Clients are paid \$5.15 per hour during the work evaluation period. The wage during work adjustment varies by job placement. The general range is between \$5.50 and \$7.40 per hour.

Work Preparation Activities: During work evaluation, clients attend a mandatory job readiness class daily for a couple of hours a day for four weeks. These classes cover topics such as punctuality, resume writing, interviewing skills, and workplace safety. During work adjustment, clients participate in job-readiness and life-skills workshops for approximately five hours per week. Different agency partners conduct workshops each week.

Job Placement: GoodWorks! participants use the one-stop career center, which is located in the same building as Goodwill Industries, for job placement services. It is therefore easy for clients in placements at Goodwill to access job placement services. Those in community placements can visit this one-stop career center or another one in Bibb County. Personal advisors, job coaches, and job developers from Goodwill Industries and GDOL work as a team with clients to help them find unsubsidized jobs.

Job Retention: Personal advisors and job coaches continue to work with clients for up to a year after they begin working in a permanent job. GoodWorks! staff follow up with clients at least weekly for the first month and every two weeks after.

APPENDIX A-2: CLARKE COUNTY

Date of Site Visit: May 20-21, 2002

Program Implementation Date: January 2001

Number of Clients Enrolled: 8 (current), 32 (total)

Agencies Involved in the Local Collaborative: GDOL, DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, and Kelley Diversified, Inc. (KDI)

Contracted Employment Service Provider(s): At present, KDI is the only service provider for GoodWorks! participants. Although GDOL also contracted with Hope Haven, they served only a few clients and are no longer accepting referrals.

Program Staffing: Three individuals at KDI have responsibility for GoodWorks! clients. In addition, two of these individuals do work for other programs. The KDI career advisor is the only staff member designated full-time to GoodWorks!. She recruits clients, provides intensive case management, teaches the job search workshop, and supervises clients in their work placement. KDI also has a Welfare-to-Work-funded job retention specialist who assists in tracking clients placed in unsubsidized employment and helps with the job readiness workshop during work evaluation.

Referring GoodWorks! Participants: Clients are identified as potential participants and referred to GoodWorks! by their DFCS case manager.

Outreach: The career advisor at KDI is responsible for recruiting clients who are referred to the program.

Program Orientation: The six-hour GoodWorks! orientation is held at KDI. Clients are given an overview of the program and a tour of KDI. Clients also participate in a short a group assessment activity conducted by KDI staff and in which clients identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Work Placements

Types of Placements: KDI offers on-site group placements in production and assembly, custodial, and clerical positions.

Employer of Record: Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, the agency that oversees the local Welfare-to-Work program, coordinates the payment of client wages.

Wages: Clients earn \$5.15 per hour during work evaluation. Wages increase to \$6.00 per hour during work adjustment.

Work Preparation Activities: During work evaluation, participants spend 90 minutes a day in job readiness and life skills classes. Topics covered in the classes include anger management, workplace expectations, domestic violence, and budgeting. Interviewing skills and job search activities are covered during the last week of the class. During work adjustment, clients meet weekly in a staff meeting on Monday mornings from 9-9:30 a.m..

Job Placement: The KDI job retention specialist along with GDOL job developers work with clients individually to find jobs. Leads are found through the GDOL job bank, newspapers, and by talking with employers. Clients can also be referred to the GDOL career center for job placement services.

Job Retention: The KDI job retention specialist follows up monthly with clients for a year after they get a job.

APPENDIX A-3: DEKALB COUNTY

Date of Site Visit: April 22-24, 2002

Program Implementation Date: December 2000

Number of Clients: 114 (current); 167 (total)

Agencies Involved in the Local Collaborative: GDOL, DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, DeKalb County Workforce Development Department, and Goodwill Industries of North Georgia

Contracted Employment Service Provider(s): Goodwill Industries of North Georgia.

Program Staffing: In DeKalb County, the core GoodWorks! staff assigned exclusively to the program are employees of Goodwill Industries. GoodWorks! staff at Goodwill Industries includes a program manager, a field services coordinator (who supervises job coaches), four personal advisors, five job coaches, an internal auditor, and recruiter. Unique to DeKalb is how job coaches are assigned to work with clients in different periods of service delivery. One job coach handles 30 to 40 cases in work evaluation, three job coaches handle 10 to 15 cases each in work adjustment, and one job coach handles 30 to 40 cases in job retention. Staff from other agencies who work with GoodWorks! core staff include a DFCS community resource specialist, who expedites access to supportive services and coordinates communication and services between DFCS and GoodWorks!, and job developers from GDOL and Goodwill Industries, who work part of the week to place GoodWorks! clients in jobs.

Identifying GoodWorks! Participants: Clients are identified and referred to GoodWorks! by DFCS case managers, through Vocational Rehabilitation case conferences held after each assessment, and by the Welfare-to-Work program recruiter.

Outreach: Under the initial GoodWorks! contract, DeKalb County hired two recruiters to conduct home visits together or each with a personal advisor. The recruiter position was eliminated by Goodwill Industries of North Georgia in November 2001 with the implementation of the new program contracts. Personal advisors now handle these responsibilities. The Goodwill Industries recruiter for the Welfare-to-Work program conducts some home visits to individuals referred to GoodWorks! as needed.

Program Orientation: DeKalb County conducts a full-day orientation twice a month at Goodwill Industries. Orientation includes a program overview, assignment of a personal advisor, assessment, and a drug screen and criminal background check. Clients begin their work placement a week after orientation, giving them time to make child care and transportation arrangements, deal with housing issues, and take other steps necessary to prepare for work.

Work Placement

Types of Placements: Clients are assigned to group placements on site at Goodwill Industries during work evaluation. During work adjustment, clients can remain with Goodwill Industries or choose from a range of community placements in, for example, clerical, child care, janitorial, food service, and health care positions.

Employer of Record: DeKalb County is the only study site that coordinates client payroll through Goodwill Industries rather than the local workforce development agency.

Wages: Clients are paid \$5.15 during work evaluation and \$6.50 per hour during work adjustment.

Work Preparation Activities: During work evaluation, clients participate in a six-week motivational class on Mondays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. designed to prepare them for change. During work adjustment, clients meet every Monday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for “job club,” a service to help clients find employment in general and to discuss such work-related issues as workplace behaviors, personal hygiene, and resume writing in particular.

Job Placement: DeKalb County GoodWorks! staff attempt to find community work placements that may lead to permanent employment. As part of this process, staff and job developers from Goodwill Industries and GDOL inform clients about job leads individually or during the weekly job club. Clients can also look for jobs in Goodwill Industries’ employment resource room (“Work Connections”) and GDOL’s career center.

Job Retention: GoodWorks! personal advisors follow up with clients monthly after they get a job. One of the job coaches is designated specifically to work with clients during job retention. In addition, the Goodwill Industries job developer follows up with employed clients after 7 days, 30 days, 90 days, 6 months, and one year of employment. Clients who stay employed for 3 months receive a \$150 job retention bonus from Goodwill Industries as an employment incentive.

APPENDIX A-4: FULTON COUNTY

Date of Site Visit: November 14-16, 2001

Program Implementation Date: January 2001

Number of Clients: 180 (current), 281 (total)

Agencies Involved in the Local Collaborative: GDOL, DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Fulton County Office of Workforce Development (Fulton County)

Contracted Employment Service Providers: Bobby Dodd Industries, J. Stinson & Associates, and WORKTEC

Program Staffing: Fulton County is the only site in which the core GoodWorks! staff are employees of an agency other than the contracted employment service providers—the county Office of Workforce Development, which hires the GoodWorks! coordinator, 15 personal advisors, and two recruiters. The employment service providers hire job coaches and worksite supervisors.

Identifying GoodWorks! Participants: DFCS case managers inform individuals about GoodWorks! and ask them if they would like to participate. Although people can participate in other employment and training programs, the alternatives are limited.

Outreach: Recruiters outstationed daily at the DFCS office from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. meet with people referred to the program. Recruiters also conduct home visits and identify the work supports needed by individuals referred to the program and begin the process for making these supports available.

Program Orientation: Orientation comprises two four-hour half-day sessions. In the first session, clients are given an overview of the program and are screened for drug use. In the second session, clients are assigned a personal advisor, who assesses their work history, educational attainment, and job skills and interests. Based on the assessment, the personal advisor determines which employment service provider the client should be referred to. Work-ready clients are referred to J. Stinson & Associates. Others go to Bobby Dodd. In addition to the basic orientation, J. Stinson & Associates holds a week-long orientation designed to assess client work interests and service needs.

Work Placements

Types of Placements: Clients are assigned to a work placement on the basis of their level of job readiness. Clients referred to J. Stinson & Associates are assigned to community placements. Bobby Dodd Industries, the service provider to which nonwork-ready clients are referred, provides on-site group placements. WORKTEC works in partnership with J. Stinson & Associates to provide on-site group placements

for clients who were originally assigned to J. Stinson & Associates, but need more support before being referred to a community placement.

Employer of Record: Fulton County Office of Workforce Development

Wages: Participants earn \$5.36 during work evaluation and \$6.40 per hour during work adjustment.

Work Preparation Activities: Clients participate in a motivational workshop that focuses on self-esteem and job readiness. During work adjustment, clients assigned to J. Stinson & Associates attend workshops to improve job readiness, increase motivation, and teach basic life skills related to relationships, communication, and effective parenting. Clients at Bobby Dodd Industries participate daily in a two-hour workshop focusing on job readiness and career exploration.

Job Placement: Clients are required to spend one day a week at the GDOL one-stop career center for job placement assistance. Employment service providers also help with job placement. Placements arranged by J. Stinson & Associates at community agencies provides a good springboard for permanent unsubsidized jobs. In addition, Stinson has an in-house job developer who finds jobs for GoodWorks! clients. Bobby Dodd Industries provides clients with job leads once they are ready for work.

Job Retention: Personal advisors from Fulton County work with clients for two years after they begin the program. The amount of contact personal advisors have with the client depends on their needs.

APPENDIX A-5: RICHMOND COUNTY

Date of Site Visit: September 24-26, 2001

Program Implementation Date: March 2000

Number of Clients: 375 (current); 456 (total)

Agencies Involved in the Local Collaborative: GDOL, DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, Richmond/Burke Job Training Authority (JTA), Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia and the CSRA, and Golden Harvest Food Bank

Contracted Employment Service Providers: Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia and the CSRA and Golden Harvest Food Bank

Program Staffing: Goodwill Industries employs 23 personal advisors and 11 job coaches to work with GoodWorks! participants. Goodwill Industries initially hired a recruiter. However, this position was eliminated November 2001. Although other Goodwill Industries staff may work with participants, they are not hired specifically for this purpose. Golden Harvest employs one individual specifically for GoodWorks!, but work-site supervisors and other Golden Harvest staff interact regularly with GoodWorks! participants. Job developers from GDOL and JTA help to identify job leads for GoodWorks! clients.

Identifying GoodWorks! Participants: Initially, all clients who had been on cash assistance longer than 30 months were automatically referred to GoodWorks! without prescreening them. As a result of this broad referral approach, a large number of clients were referred to the program regardless of whether they were interested in it or, conversely, whether it was appropriate for them. Clients are now screened and referred by their DFCS case manager, who recommends placement at either Goodwill Industries or Golden Harvest, depending on the client's employment interests and the availability of slots at each program.

Outreach: Richmond County hired a recruiter to conduct all outreach activities for Goodwill Industries, although Goodwill eliminated the position with the implementation of the new contracts in November 2001. Now, personal advisors handle outreach. At Golden Harvest the personal advisor handles all outreach recruiting.

Program Orientation: Orientation at Goodwill Industries is held weekly or biweekly, depending on the number of referrals. In a three-hour orientation in the morning, clients learn about the GoodWorks! program and meet their personal advisor. They immediately begin their work placement that afternoon. At Golden Harvest, orientation lasts a day and covers topics similar to those covered in the Goodwill orientation.

Work Placements

Types of Placements: Both Goodwill Industries and Golden Harvest provide on-site group placements. Placements at Goodwill Industries are mostly in sorting, hanging,

and cashiering. At Golden Harvest, clients can choose from warehouse work (e.g., sorting, pulling orders, stacking), cashiering, forklift operating, and food preparation.

Employer of Record: Richmond/Burke Job Training Authority, the agency that oversees local Welfare-to-Work programs, coordinates the payment of client wages.

Wages: Clients earn \$5.15 during work evaluation. Clients then assigned to Goodwill Industries earn \$6.00 per hour, while those at Golden Harvest earn \$8.52 per hour. Although the wages at Golden Harvest are higher, the duration of the placement is shorter than at Goodwill (13 weeks compared to approximately 6 months).

Work Preparation Activities: Clients are required to attend employment and life skills workshops provided on-site at Goodwill Industries and Golden Harvest daily for four to five hours per week. The workshops cover a variety of topics such as the importance of work, maintaining a positive attitude, employment experience, resume writing, and interviewing skills. After four months into work adjustment, clients at Goodwill Industries are required to begin job search activities.

Job Placement: Employment service providers work in conjunction with GDOL job developers to place clients in permanent jobs. At Goodwill Industries, clients have access to a range of job placement resources, such as a computerized job bank and a book of job leads. To assist with job placement, GDOL staff are co-located part-time at Goodwill Industries. At Golden Harvest, Golden Harvest and GDOL staff work with clients individually to identify job leads.

Job Retention: Goodwill Industries and Golden Harvest staff follow up with clients regularly for up to two years after clients become employed.

APPENDIX B

**CHARACTERISTICS OF FOCUS
GROUP PARTICIPANTS**

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Table B.1 Characteristics of Current GoodWorks! Clients Who Participated in Focus Groups

Characteristics	Bibb County	Clarke County	DeKalb County	Fulton County	Richmond County	Total
Number of Respondents	7	8	14	10	10	49
Gender						
Male	0	0	1	0	0	1
Female	7	8	13	10	10	48
Age (years)						
Younger than 20	0	0	0	0	0	0
21-30	5	5	3	5	6	24
31-40	1	2	9	4	2	18
41-55	1	1	2	1	2	7
Race/Ethnicity						
White	0	0	1	0	2	3
Nonwhite	7	8	13	9	8	45
Marital Status						
Never married	4	6	8	7	6	31
Married	0	0	1	0	1	2
Living with partner	0	0	1	0	0	1
Separated	1	1	2	3	1	8
Divorced	2	1	2	0	1	6
Widowed	0	0	0	0	1	1
Average Number of Children	3.0	3.4	2.6	4.0	3.8	3.4
Average Age of the Youngest Child	6.7	5.6	7.2	5.0	6.2	6.1
Educational Level Completed						
Grammar/elementary School	0	0	0	0	1	1
Junior high/middle school	1	0	0	1	0	2
High school	3	4	6	7	5	25
G.E.D.	2	1	2	0	2	7
Tech/vocational School	1	2	3	1	2	9
Community college	0	0	2	1	0	3
University (4 year)	0	1	1	0	0	2
TANF Receipt in Past 5 Years (months)						
1-23	2	1	1	4	5	13
24-47	3	4	5	6	2	20
48-60	1	3	7	0	3	14
Time in Work Placement (months)						
1-3	3	8	11	3	4	29
4-6	2	0	1	3	2	8
More than 6	1	0	1	4	2	8

Table B.2. Characteristics of Former GoodWorks! Clients Who Participated in Focus Groups

Characteristics	Bibb County	DeKalb County	Fulton County	Richmond County	Total
Number of Respondents	8	7	7	11	33
Gender					
Male	0	0	0	1	1
Female	8	7	7	10	32
Age (years)					
Younger than 20	0	0	0	0	0
21-30	2	3	4	4	13
31-40	5	4	3	5	17
41-55	1	0	0	2	3
Race/Ethnicity					
White	0	0	0	0	6
Nonwhite	8	7	7	11	33
Marital Status					
Never married	6	4	7	5	22
Married	0	0	0	1	1
Living with partner	0	0	0	2	2
Separated	2	2	0	0	4
Divorced	0	1	0	1	2
Widowed	0	0	0	2	2
Average Number of Children	4.6	4.6	2.6	4.5	4.1
Average Age of the Youngest Child	5.3	3.8	5.4	6.2	5.2
Educational Level Completed					
Grammar/elementary school	0	0	0	0	0
Junior high/middle school	0	0	0	1	1
High school	1	3	2	7	13
G.E.D.	5	1	2	1	9
Tech/vocational school	2	3	1	2	8
Community college	0	0	1	0	1
University (4 year)	0	0	1	0	1
TANF Receipt in Past 5 Years (months)					
1-23	4	4	7	3	18
24-47	3	2	0	2	7
48-60	1	1	0	6	8
Currently Receiving TANF					
Yes	0	0	0	1	1
No	8	7	7	10	32
Completed Work Placement					
Less than 3 months ago	4	1	2	1	8
3-6 months ago	2	3	5	3	13
More than 6 months ago	1	3	0	4	8
Employment Status					
Not employed	0	0	0	0	0
Working less than 20 hrs/wk	1	0	1	0	8
Working more than 20 hrs/wk	7	7	6	11	31

Note: Data are not reported for Clarke County because focus groups were not held there.